

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY



T. L. SAPPINGTON

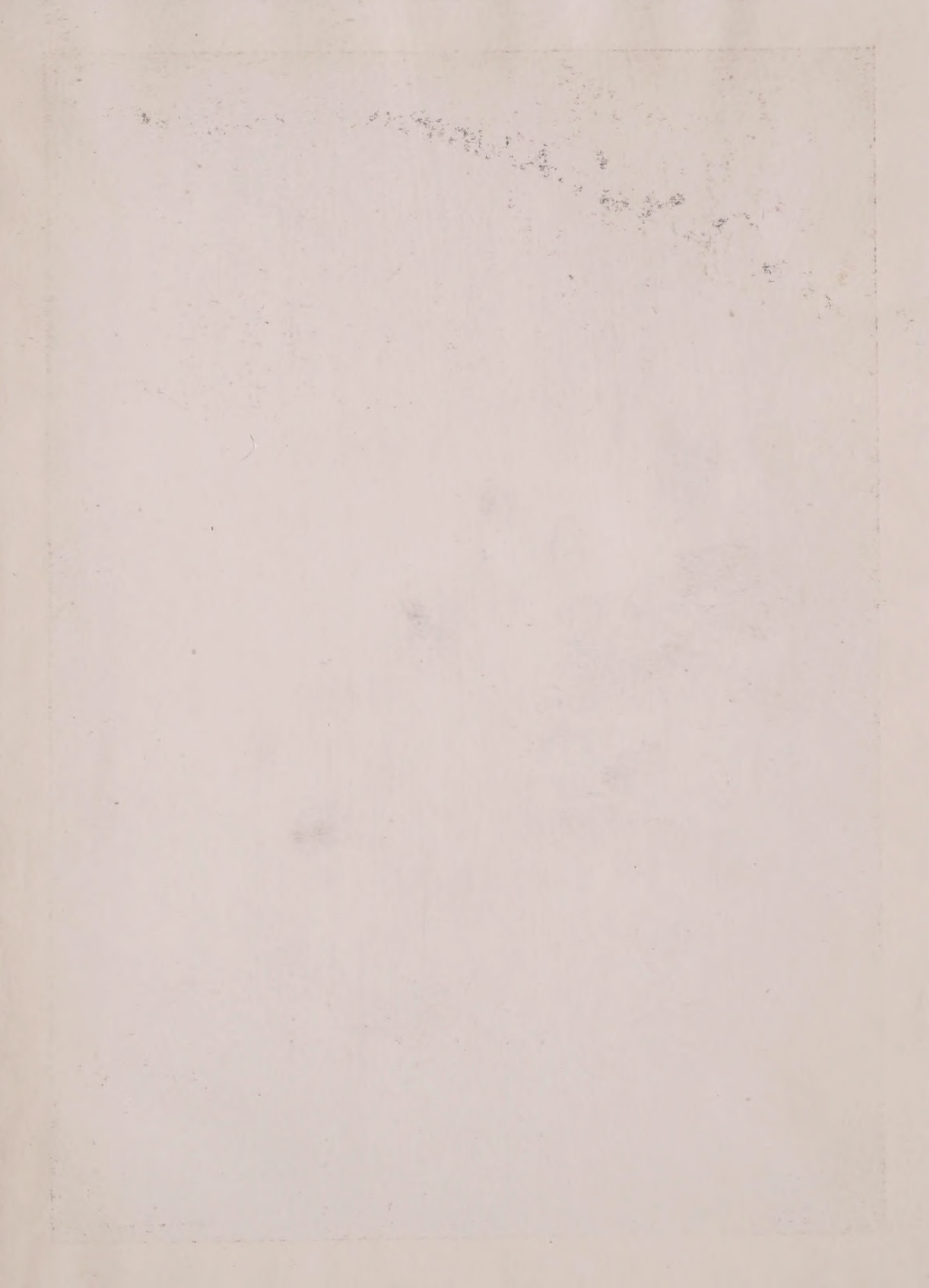


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"I always thought fairies were glittery with wings"

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

BY

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Author of "The Sociable Sand Witch"

ILLUSTRATED BY

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THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

Some people believe in fairies and some people do not. Johnny Jones believed in them when his mother told him fairy stories, but at other times he did not think about the matter, especially if the weather was warm and there were grasshoppers in the back garden, for Johnny certainly did love to chase grasshoppers. Well, one morning in June when the sky was blue and the grass was green, and the grasshoppers were whirring about in the sunshine, and Johnny's mind was far away from fairies, all of a sudden he came across one. And where do you suppose the fairy was? It was riding on a grasshopper that the boy had just caught under his cap, and the first thing he knew of the fairy was when he lifted his cap and heard a squeaky little voice in the grass, which so surprised him he let the grasshopper get away.

"Oh," exclaimed Johnny, his eyes very wide.

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Then he parted the grass carefully so he could see the fairy better.

"Be careful, now," said the fairy, "or you'll break my spectacles."

Except for his size he did not look like a fairy at all. That is, he had no wings, no silver wand, or anything like that. Instead he was dressed in a long blue coat with gilt buttons, while on his feet were curly-toed shoes with white gaiters over them. Instead of a wand he clutched an umbrella, and as he spoke to Johnny he was straightening the spectacles on his nose. Having done that he looked about him anxiously. He was scarcely taller than the grass itself and he could not seem to find what he was looking for.

"Do you see my hat anywhere?" he asked.

And then, as Johnny handed him the little pointed hat that lay near by, he thanked the boy politely.

"I suppose you know," he continued, as he pulled the hat down over his ears, "that you have just saved my life, eh?"

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"Why no," said Johnny, "Did I?"

"You certainly did," said the fairy, putting his umbrella under his arm and dusting his hands fussily, "that grasshopper was running away with me. He had the bit in his teeth and I couldn't do a thing with him. And then—you threw your cap over him and stopped his mad career. Sir, I thank you a thousand times, and I shall do my very best to show my gratitude."

"But—but," cried Johnny, "you don't understand. I was only *chasing* that grasshopper. I always chase grasshoppers in the summer time. I like it. Of course if I saved your life I'm very glad, but I didn't even know you were on the grasshopper."

The fairy chuckled as he climbed up on the boy's knee. "Why is it," he said, "that all heroes are alike? Not one of them will ever admit he *is* a hero. But I know what you did all right and I'm going to reward you, and don't you forget it."

Then he told Johnny that his name was Professor Dap. "I teach in the University of Moon-

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shine," he went on, "and I've been working very hard, and my nerves have gone back on me. So my doctor told me to take a grasshopper ride every morning, but of course, if I had known the grasshopper was going to run away I should not have tried it."

"Well," said Johnny, "I do think you're a funny-looking fairy."

"Funny-looking," exclaimed the other. "That's a nice thing to say to a person old enough to be your father."

"Oh," explained the boy, "I mean I always thought fairies were glittery with wings and diamond crowns and things. I never knew they wore spectacles."

"Indeed," said Professor Dap, "well, that just shows what you know about fairies. Now if I wore wings and a diamond crown I'd look ridiculous, whereas the way I am I look respectable. Of course some fairies *are* glittery—*quite* glittery—especially a fairy queen, who is *very* dressy, but that does not mean that all fairies are. No sir-ee,

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it takes all sorts of fairies to make a fairyland and I'm a very good sample, I think. And now what can I do to show my gratitude, eh? Is anything or anybody bothering you?"

"Why no," said Johnny, "not that I can think of."

"But," said Professor Dap, "isn't there a dragon around here annoying your family, or something like that?"

"A dragon," exclaimed the boy, "I should say not. Why—why I've never even seen a dragon."

Professor Dap rolled his eyes. "Never seen a dragon! My, my, then it's time you did."

Whereupon he opened his umbrella and closed it twice, and the next moment a dragon with zig-zag stripes appeared in a distant field and came squirming toward them.

"Now," said the Professor, "we'll see if he annoys you, and if he does I'll chase him away."

"Oh," said Johnny, nervously, "don't let's wait for him to annoy me. Chase him anyway."

"No," said Professor Dap, "that is not the way

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to do it at all. We'll wait until he does something nasty."

By this time the dragon had reached the garden fence and was bursting through it, and Johnny felt more nervous than ever.

"I—I—I think I'd better go indoors," he said. "I—I—I think maybe my mother wants me."

"Your mother does nothing of the sort," said Professor Dap, "and if you *do* go indoors the dragon will go there, too, and you can fight him much better out here."

"Fight him!" shouted Johnny, in alarm. "I'm not going to fight him. Why—why, I never heard of such a thing."

"But," said the Professor, "if you don't fight him how can I help you? Unless you do something to him he may not do anything to you. See?"

Well, you may be sure Johnny did not care for any such arrangement as *that*. He wished he had never rescued Professor Dap from the runaway grasshopper. In fact, he wished he had never



"Well," said the dragon, "here I am"

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chased a grasshopper in his life and would have fled into the house without waiting another moment, only before he could do so the dragon arrived with a snort, and stood puffing and panting like a fire engine.

"Well," said the dragon, grinning rather awfully, "here I am, and now what?"

"Turn your back on him," said Professor Dap, to Johnny. "Show him you don't care for his acquaintance. That will make him challenge you."

But nothing in the world could have made Johnny Jones turn his back on that dragon. If he was going to be eaten he wanted to see when the eating commenced and not to be grabbed from behind. So he just stared into the dragon's green eyes while his knees wobbled and his hair bristled like a scrubbing brush.

"How—how—how do you do," he stuttered, nodding to the monster. "I—I—I hope you feel quite well."

"Oh, shucks," exclaimed Professor Dap, impatiently, "that's no way to talk. Why, he'll think

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you are trying to be friends. Tell him to be gone or you'll engage him in mortal combat. He'll stay forever if you don't."

"He'd—he'd better not," said Johnny. "If my father comes home and finds him in our garden he'll—he'll give him something he won't like."

"Say," put in the dragon, "are you talking to me or are you talking to yourself?"

"Why, no," replied Johnny, "I'm talking to Professor Dap. He wants me—"

"Professor Dap," said the monster. "I don't see any Professor Dap. Where is he?"

"Why, he's right here on my knee," said the boy. "He's a fairy and—"

"'Nuff said!" exclaimed the dragon, in a tone of disgust. "I might have known there was a fairy around. Every time I try to take a nap some fairy sends for me. Gee whiz, these fairies are as bad as mosquitoes for bothering you. And the worst is they're so small I can't see them."

"Is that so?" squeaked Professor Dap, testily. "Well, if I'm so small you can't see me I'll jerk

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myself up a bit so you can. And then you can't say I'm not playing fair."

And with that he jumped down from Johnny's knee, jerked his arms up as though lifting something, and the next moment was almost as tall as the boy by his side.

"There," he said to the dragon, "can you see me now, old wheezer?"

"Yes," replied the monster, "I can, though I must say you are not much to look at. And now perhaps you'll tell me why you spoiled my nap?"

"Well," said Professor Dap, "this boy saved my life and I wanted to reward him, so I decided to send for a dragon to attack him, when, of course, I would step in and effect a rescue. So kindly go ahead and devour him and don't let's waste any more time."

"Oh," said Johnny to the dragon, "I don't think that's fair. I don't want to be rescued—that is, I didn't want you to come here at all. I'm—I'm not mad at you in the least, and if you don't bother me I shan't bother you, honest."

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"That's all right," replied the monster, "I understand exactly, and I'm not going to touch you. I don't devour folks unless there's a reason, and I see no reason for any such performance in this case. Of course, if there was a princess with you, that would be another thing because I simply cannot resist princesses, and unless you stopped me from doing it, I'd certainly have her for luncheon, but as there isn't a princess I might as well go back and finish my nap." And having said that he started to wiggle away.

"Stop!" cried Professor Dap. "Don't be in such a hurry. If a princess is needed we'll have to get one." Then he turned to Johnny. "Are there any princesses in your house?"

"My goodness, no," said the boy, "there's nobody there just now but Caroline, the cook."

"All right," said the Professor, briskly, "she'll do. I'll turn her into a princess."

"But—but," cried Johnny, with a horrified expression, "she—she would never do. She's too fat and she's—she's a very dark brown."

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“Fat and brown!” exclaimed the dragon, smacking his lips. “Oh boy, that’s the way I like ’em! The fatter, and the browner the better. I’m awfully tired of the pale, limp princesses I’ve been eating. It’s this way:

Of all the ladies I have et
In my career, not one as yet
Has ever borne a name so fine,
Or tasty as your Caroline.
And when you also say she’s fat,
And in addition tell me that
The damsel too, is nice and brown,
I simply long to gulp her down.

For every princess heretofore
Has been so white and limp with fright,
That eating her has been a bore,
But yours will tempt my appetite.

Then he told Johnny to go and ask Caroline to step out in the garden a moment. “When she comes out,” he continued, “I’ll transform her and then I’ll turn your house into a castle. And after that I’ll wish you a horse, and a fine suit of gold

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armor, and a two edged sword, and you and the dragon can fight for the princess."

"Yes," put in the dragon, "and I'll get her, too. I've tasted Gwendolines, and Rosalindes, and Genevieves, and found 'em fair, but I'll bet a Caroline will beat 'em all. Oh, I can hardly wait to begin."

"But," said Johnny, "I don't believe Caroline would let us turn her into a princess, and I *know* my father would be awful mad if our house was changed into a castle. He likes it the way it is."

However, though he talked, and talked, and tried to make the dragon and Professor Dap understand that they had better let Caroline and the house alone, and that he did not want a horse or a suit of armor with which to fight for the princess, they insisted on having their own way. And when the dragon declared that if Caroline was not turned into a princess right off he would eat her, and the house, and Johnny all at once, Johnny reluctantly went indoors and asked the cook if she would not come into the garden.

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"What for?" asked Caroline, who was rolling out pie crust. "Ain't I got enough to do without helping you chase grasshoppers? Run along, child, and don't bother me."

"No," said Johnny, "I won't run along. I want you to come into the garden. It's not to chase grasshoppers, it's to show you something you never saw before."

"Something I never saw before?" repeated the cook.

"Yes," said Johnny, "something nobody around here ever saw before."

"Eh?" exclaimed Caroline, in a startled tone.

With that she brushed aside the window curtain and looked out, and when she saw the dragon sitting on his haunches conversing with Professor Dap, she almost fell on top of the stove.

"Who give you that thing out there?" she demanded.

"Nobody gave it to me," replied Johnny. "It—it just came."

"Well, you take it out of the garden right away

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or I'll tell your pa. And tell that little man to go, too."

"But," said the boy, "they won't go away. They say you've got to come out into the garden and be turned into a princess."

The cook frowned. "Don't you make fun of me, Johnny Jones, or you won't git one teeny, weeny piece of this pie. Whoever heard tell of a colored princess—nobody, and you know it."

"Oh, that don't make a bit of difference," said the boy, eagerly. "The dragon says he's tired of pale princesses. He wants one like you—all nice, and fat and brown. Please come out, Caroline."

"No," said the cook, "I won't. And you go chase that thing away. Go on, now."

"Please, Caroline, do come out," repeated Johnny. "If—if you don't I'll be eaten, and you'll be eaten, and the house will be eaten; and there won't be a thing left when father and mother get home."

"Who says so?" inquired the girl, staring at him. "Who told you that stuff? 'Tain't so!"

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"Yes, it is," said Johnny, "that is what the dragon out there is waiting for. He wants to eat you as soon as Professor Dap turns you into a princess."

"Huh!" said Caroline. "Is that what that thing is—a dragon?"

"Yes," replied Johnny, "and—and I'm afraid."

"Well," said Caroline, looking rather frightened herself, "you needn't be, 'cause it ain't going to eat me and it ain't going to eat you—not if I know it. You just stay inside here and when your pa comes—"

"It won't do any good," interrupted the boy, "because if you don't go out the dragon will not wait until father comes."

And sure enough the dragon did not, for presently he and Professor Dap came to the kitchen door and pushed it open.

"Well," said the monster, "is Caroline coming out or not? We're not going to wait all day."

"No," said Professor Dap. "I've got my work to do at the University of Moonshine, and if this

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girl wants me to turn her into a princess she'd better hurry up."

"Indeed," said the cook, "well, I don't want you to turn me into anything."

"Oh, come now," said the dragon, coaxingly, pushing his head forward and smiling with all his might, "do let him turn you into a princess. I can't have a bit of fun unless you're a princess."

"What do I care," retorted Caroline, with a sniff. "And stop making faces at me."

"I'm not making faces," responded the dragon, "I'm smiling. I'm trying to be as nice as I can."

"Yes, and I am, too," put in Professor Dap. Then he turned to Johnny. "Do hurry and get her out. Just think of the horse and the golden armor you'll have."

But Johnny shook his head. "I'm not going to do it. I don't want any horse or any golden armor, and I'd rather have Caroline just as she is. And I want you both to go away."

"You want us to go away," repeated the Professor.

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"Yes, I do," replied Johnny.

"And what about my rewarding you for saving my life?"

"I don't want any reward," said Johnny. "You're quite welcome to your life."

"Oh, indeed," snapped Professor Dap, "I suppose you think my life wasn't worth a reward, eh? Very well, sir, then I *won't* give any reward. I'll just let the dragon eat you." With that he turned to the dragon and snapped his fingers. "Go ahead, Bill," he said, "and do your best. I shan't interfere."

Whereupon the dragon stopped smiling, opened his mouth wide and swallowed the kitchen steps like a flash.

"Oh," screamed Caroline, "did you see that? He's gone and eaten my steps. Shoo!"

And then as the dragon did not shoo, and commenced to push his way inside, and as Johnny was backing hastily into a corner, she turned and seized the mound of dough on her pie board, and as the dragon opened his jaws still wider to make a bite

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at her, she flung the dough into his mouth. Whang—they closed with a snap, and when they did that you may be sure they stayed closed, for the dough was awfully sticky and it held his teeth together like a vise so that he could not even roar except through his nose.

Then Caroline grabbed her rolling pin and she went for the dragon as hard as she could, and after she had given him two or three whacks on the head he tucked his tail between his legs and ran out of the garden—or rather wiggled out—and across the fields, and out of sight, as fast as he could.

And you may be sure when he did that, Johnny heaved a sigh of relief and was just going out to meet the victorious Caroline on her way back to the house after pursuing the monster, when who should come from behind the stationary wash-tubs but Professor Dap.

“Save me!” he gasped. “Save me from that dreadful person who prepares your meals and I’ll give you anything you want. Help me get back to the University of Moonshine.”

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"Why, how can I help you?" asked Johnny. "I don't know how to get there."

"Of course you don't," said Professor Dap, "but I do if you'll catch me a grasshopper."

So Johnny went out into the garden and caught a grasshopper, and then held it while Professor Dap, after making himself small again, got on its back.

"Thanks," said the Professor, "and now what can I do to repay you for this, even if I can't reward you for saving my life the other time?"

"Well," said Johnny, "I wish you'd put the kitchen steps back. My father won't like it when he finds them gone, and he'll think it very strange when I tell him a dragon ate them."

"All right," said the Professor, "I'll do it, and not only that but I'll make that Caroline person forget all about everything that has happened, so in case I should be grasshopper riding in your garden again and she caught the grasshopper, she would not know who I was."

And with that he stretched out his fingers to-

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

ward the empty air, and then he motioned as though throwing something toward the kitchen door, and bing—there were the kitchen steps in place all right again. And then as Caroline came up the garden walk he pointed his finger at her and muttered something. And having done that he waved his hand to Johnny, gave the grasshopper a prod with his heel, and flew away.

“Well, I declare,” said the cook, with a bewildered expression, as she came to where Johnny was sitting on the grass, “I done clean forgot what I come out here for. Ain’t that funny?”

Then she went into the kitchen only to come out the next moment and ask Johnny if he had taken the dough from her pie board.

“Why, no,” said the boy, “isn’t it there?” Although of course he knew it was not.

“No, it ain’t,” said Caroline, crossly, “and that’s what comes of keeping a cat around, ’cause now you won’t get no pie for dinner to-night.”

And sure enough there was no pie, but Johnny did not mind so very much, because everything was

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all right again and if there was no pie for him to eat, at least there was no dragon to eat him. And you may be sure, while he hated to do it, he determined to stop catching grasshoppers the rest of the summer anyhow, for he had no desire to run across another Grateful Fairy.

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

If you saw a round, roly-poly, rather oriental-looking person with three chins, a tasseled cap, or fez on his head, a green silk gown, tied with a red cord, wrapped about him, and two big ears with gold rings in them, sitting in a drug store drinking chocolate sodas until he had consumed ten of them in about ten minutes, you would surely think he was rather surprising.

And that is exactly what Ric Martin and his grandfather thought as they sat near by drinking *their* chocolate sodas. In fact, they put down their glasses in order to watch the stranger, for Ric, who was a cheerful little boy of seven, had never in all his seven years seen such a sight. And Ric's grandfather, who was an equally cheerful old gentleman of seventy, had never in all his seventy years seen the like either. And presently the per-

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

son they were watching noticed they were watching him.

"Well," he said, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, "what are you looking at?"

At which remark both Ric and his grandfather stopped looking and began to drink their sodas as fast as they could.

"Humph!" said the stranger, "your manners are something delicious. I asked you a question, didn't I?"

"Eh?" inquired Ric's grandfather.

"Don't 'eh' me," retorted the other. "You heard what I said, you know you did."

"Well, what if I did?" snapped Ric's grandfather, getting rather red in the face. "We don't have to answer, do we? And besides, you know what we were looking at."

"What?" asked the fat man.

"Why you, of course," put in Ric.

"Ah," said the stranger, "now we're getting on a bit. You noticed me particularly, didn't you? Come, admit it!"

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

"We certainly did," said Ric's grandfather.
"We most certainly did."

The man with the fez rubbed his hands gleefully. "Thank goodness," he said, "then I didn't drink all those chocolate sodas for nothing. You see," he went on, "I despise chocolate sodas and all such foolishness, but I had to attract your attention somehow. I'm looking for an attachment, you know."

"An attachment!" echoed Ric and his grandfather.

"Yes," said the other, "some one I can be fond of, and I've found them at last. I'm going to be fond of you two."

Then he took a small looking glass from his pocket and handed it to Ric. "Now both of you take a peep in that," he said.

And then, as they looked, the man on the stool near them disappeared, and the next instant they saw him in the mirror, a tiny little figure. And then, bing—he was out of the mirror and on the stool again.

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"Just as easy," he said. "As long as I'm attached to somebody I can go in and out of that looking glass all day long. But if I don't have an attachment, or if I lose my affection for those I'm attached to, I have to go back in the glass and stay there. My name is Reflecto and I'm what you call a mirror spirit, a pleasant enough existence for any one who has an affectionate side to his nature, don't you think? And now that we are mutually drawn together, let's go out and enjoy ourselves."

"We'll do nothing of the sort," said Ric's grandfather. "And if you are drawn to us we are not drawn to you. And it's a wonder the soda water clerk has not put you out of the shop before this."

"Ho, ho," laughed the Looking Glass Man. "Why, my dear sir, he doesn't even know I'm in the store. I can only be seen and heard by those I'm fond of, and I'm *not* fond of *him*, I can tell you *that*. When you came in, this little mirror was lying on the counter where it had been left by the last person to whom I had been attached, and I was curled up inside wondering when I was going

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

to get out again. And then—then I saw you and your grandson, such a jolly, friendly couple, and my affection burst into full bloom and I hopped out of the looking glass and began drinking magical chocolate sodas, and here I am.”

Ric looked at his grandfather, and his grandfather looked at the clerk lolling behind the counter chewing a toothpick.

“Well,” said the clerk, “are you over your spree or do you want another soda?”

“No more, thank you,” said Ric’s grandfather, “but I *would* like to know if you see anybody at this counter beside ourselves.”

The clerk stared. Then he leaned over to Ric and whispered hoarsely: “Say, little boy, you’d better take your grandpa home and send for the doctor. He’s seeing things.”

“You’d better take yourself home,” retorted Ric’s grandfather. “I’m healthier in my little finger than you are in your whole body.”

And with that he slammed some coins on the counter, grasped Ric by the hand and marched out

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

of the shop, but as he went, Reflecto, the Looking Glass Man, marched out with him.

"Now, see here," said Ric's grandfather, frowning at the stranger as they reached the street, "you'll have to run along."

"Oh, that's all right," replied the Looking Glass Man, "I'm perfectly willing to run along so long as I run along with you. But why not fly instead?"

Whereupon he picked up Ric and the old gentleman, whisked them through the air like a flash, and landed them on the lawn in front of their house.

"There you are," he said, "doesn't that beat the trolleys? And now let's go in and see your folks. Maybe I'll get to be fond of them, too."

Ric's grandfather stamped his foot. "If you don't go away," he said, "I'll call the police."

And no doubt he would have done so if Ric hadn't reminded him that no one could see Reflecto but themselves. "They couldn't arrest a person they couldn't see," added Ric.

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

"I should say not," exclaimed the Looking Glass Man, scornfully. "And if they did, I'd walk right through the prison walls like this."

And once more he picked up Ric and his grandfather, and the next moment, bing—they were standing in the library right before the chair where Ric's grandmother was sitting, knitting busily.

Now Ric's grandmother was a stout, white-haired old lady who led a quiet life, and she knew as well as anybody that when a person came into a room they always came through the door. And when she found Ric and his grandfather in the room without having come through the door, she did not know what to think. Indeed, she did not try to think, she just gave a loud shriek and crumpled up in a faint.

"My goodness gracious!" shouted Ric's grandfather, glaring at the Looking Glass Man, "now look what you've done."

Then he rushed off and got the ammonia bottle and held it under the nose of Ric's grandmother. And presently, as the ammonia began to revive her

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and she began to sneeze, Ric's grandfather began to look very much troubled. "Dear me," he said, "she'll want to know how we got in here and we won't know what to tell her."

"Won't know what to tell her," said the Looking Glass Man, "why tell her the truth, of course. I'm not ashamed of it if you're not."

"Oh," said Ric, "we're not ashamed of it. It's only that people won't believe about you when they can't see you."

"That's not my fault," said Reflecto. "As I told you before, I'm only visible to those I'm fond of, and I haven't known your grandmother long enough for that."

And sure enough when Ric's grandmother came out of her swoon she began to ask questions, and the more she asked the less Ric and his grandfather felt like answering them, because they were afraid if they told her about the Looking Glass Man she would faint again. But when they found that she would faint if they did not tell, Ric's grandfather sat right down and told her everything. And

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

when he got through, Ric's grandmother was as strong and well as ever, indeed she was stronger, for she made Ric hold a thermometer in his mouth to see if he had a fever, and then she made his grandfather do the same thing. And while the thermometer showed they did not have a fever, she said they did, and made them both go to bed without waiting for dinner.

"Gee whiz!" said the Looking Glass Man, bending over them as they lay in bed together waiting for the doctor to come, "I'm awfully sorry about this, you know. I had no idea things would turn out so badly."

"Oh, go away," retorted Ric's grandfather, "you make me sicker than I'm supposed to be."

"Yes, do go away," added Ric. "We were to have apple dumplings for dinner, and now I'll not get any."

"Oh, yes, you will," said the Looking Glass Man. "Just leave that to me."

And after the doctor had been and felt their pulses, and shook his head, and left some medicine,

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and after Ric's grandmother had gone downstairs to *her* dinner, the Looking Glass Man sat down by the bed and produced a silver flute which he played upon softly, and as he played two silver trays appeared, one before Ric and one before his grandfather, and as they hastily sat up in bed each platter was covered with silver dishes, and in the dishes was a dinner fit for a king, beginning with soup and finishing with apple dumplings, just as Ric had wanted.

"Well," said the Looking Glass Man, "how does that strike you?"

But before he could say any more, and before Ric and his grandfather had a chance to taste the good things, the door opened and in walked Ric's grandmother also carrying a tray. And then like lightning the Looking Glass Man snapped his fingers and the trays on the bed disappeared, dishes and all, but not before Ric's grandmother had seen them and stopped short with her mouth open.

"Why—why—why—" she gasped.

And then she put *her* tray down with a bang and

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

looked all over the bed, and all under the bed, and when she saw nothing but Ric and his grandfather lying there beneath the covers, she sat down in the nearest chair with another bang and said in a loud tone that she must have caught the fever herself, and here was a pretty how do you do. "Of course," she added, "it was the fever that made you think you came through the wall, whereas you really came through the door while I was dozing, I suppose. And it is the fever that made me think I saw dishes on the bed just now, so I suppose I ought to go to bed and stay there like you."

"By all means," said Ric's grandfather. "We can get along very nicely."

"But," went on Ric's grandmother, "I shall do nothing of the kind. I may be taking my life in my hands, but I am not one to give up when I am nursing other people, no sir-ee."

And with that she put her tray on the bed and told Ric and his grandfather to help themselves to the tea and toast it contained while she went downstairs and telephoned to the doctor about herself.

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"My goodness," said Reflecto, when Ric's grandmother had disappeared, "you certainly will have a grand doctor's bill, won't you?"

"Yes," snapped Ric's grandfather, "and whose fault is it?" He sat up in bed and shook his fist at the Looking Glass man. "How are we ever going to get out of this mess, I'd like to know?"

The Looking Glass Man took off his cap and scratched his head thoughtfully. "I'll tell you what," he said, "suppose I create a diversion?"

"What's that?" asked Ric.

"Oh, something to take your grandma's mind off this fever business. Something to make her forget all about it. Something unexpected and exciting, you know. How would this do?"

Throwing his robe over his head he whirled about and chanted:

Come from the jungle—come from your lair,
Roaring and crouching, with fierce eyes a-glare,
King of all creatures, divert us, I say—
Hasten and chase all our troubles away.

Scarcely had he finished when from nowhere in



Over the bed it leaped roaring

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

particular there bounded into the room the largest, the shaggiest, and the most diverting African lion you could imagine. Over the bed it leaped roaring; up toward the ceiling it sprang with a snarl, around the room it galloped with a throaty rumble that shook the furniture. But what it did after that neither Ric nor his grandfather could say, for they had the bed covers over their heads, and of course you cannot hear much or see much when you are that way, and besides they were busy yelling and yelling at the top of their lungs.

Well, if you lived in a house and were downstairs, and heard shrieks and roars upstairs, you would certainly wonder what was the matter. And that is exactly what Ric's grandmother did, and not only she, but the cook, and the housemaid, and the gardener also,—all came rushing upstairs as fast as they could. But when they opened the bedroom door and saw the African lion busily creating the diversion the Looking Glass Man had ordered him to, they all rushed downstairs again, or at least they fell downstairs and out the front door

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

calling for the police. And when the Looking Glass Man saw them do that, he rubbed his hands gleefully, snapped his fingers and, bing—the lion vanished. Then he went to the bed and stripped back the covers.

“It’s all right,” he said, “he’s gone. And it worked fine. Your grandma has forgotten all about the fever, I’m sure.”

Ric’s grandfather had his arms about Ric, and Ric had *his* arms about his grandfather, and for a moment neither of them stirred. And then Ric’s grandfather opened one eye, after which he leaped to his feet, seized a pillow and knocked the Looking Glass Man flat on his back.

“You get out of this house,” he bawled. “Come on, Ric, go for him.”

And Ric, jumping from the bed seized another pillow and whacked the Looking Glass Man also.

“Ouch! Hold on! Hold on!” shouted Reflecto. “This is no way to treat a person who is fond of you. I’ll try another diversion. One you’ll like. I know lots of ’em.”

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"You dare," bellowed Ric's grandfather, giving the Looking Glass Man another bang that sent him sprawling.

"All right," said the Looking Glass Man, scrambling to his feet with a scowl on his face, "just as you say. I did think when I saw you and your grandson in the drug store that you were persons I could become truly attached to, but now I see I've made a mistake. You are quite impossible, and as for your family—phew—they are still more so. Farewell forever!"

And with that he disappeared, and when Ric's grandmother, and the cook, and the housemaid, and the gardener, and most of the neighbors came hurrying back with all the policemen they could collect, all they saw was Ric and his grandfather standing in the middle of the room looking rather bewildered.

Well, of course, they had to go to bed again, for the more they tried to explain, the more everybody was convinced they were ill. And when the doctor

THE LOOKING GLASS MAN

arrived and Ric's grandmother, and the cook, and the housemaid, and the gardener, told him how they had seen an African lion in the room, he made them go to bed also. But after a day or two everybody got tired of staying in bed, and everybody got up whether the doctor liked it or not.

"My goodness," said Ric's grandfather, as he and Ric sat at the window watching the people passing by, "if I only felt sure that Looking Glass Man wouldn't find us again I'd suggest that we go to the drug store for another chocolate soda, but as it is I'm afraid to stir out. I wonder where the scoundrel is?"

"I know," said Ric.

"What," exclaimed Ric's grandfather, leaping out of his chair with a startled expression, "you know where he is?"

"Sure," said Ric.

Then he went to a bureau drawer and brought out the little mirror the Looking Glass Man had had.

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"It fell out of his pocket the last time you hit him," he said, "and I picked it up. See, there he is, and frowning, too."

Sure enough, there was Reflecto, curled up in the mirror and looking as mad as a wet hen.

"Ah," said Ric's grandfather, "so there he is, eh?"

Then he took the mirror from Ric and he brought it down ker-whack on the toe of his boot so that it broke into a thousand pieces.

"Now," he said, "we'll get our hats and have those chocolate sodas, for we need worry no longer about that Looking Glass Man."

THE FLYING ELEPHANT

It was a beautiful, clear morning when Joey Perkins first met the Flying Elephant. Joey was eight and as plump and happy as any little boy of eight ought to be. As for the Flying Elephant, his name was Woop and he lived in the Zoological Gardens not far from Joey's home. Indeed the Zoo was so close to Joey's home he frequently came to the Gardens by himself and sat on a bench and ate peanuts, and nine times out of ten he chose the bench that was opposite Woop's cage. And that is how he came to find out that Woop was a Flying Elephant.

Now Woop, like all elephants, liked peanuts, and it may be because Joey always shared his with him, half and half, that Woop felt he ought to do something in return. Anyway, on this particular June morning as Joey sat on his bench watching

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

Woop, and nobody else seemed to be around, the elephant suddenly thrust his trunk between the bars of his cage and beckoned to the boy in a friendly manner.

"Pist!" he said, "come closer. I want to tell you something."

"Eh?" retorted Joey, sitting up very straight and looking exceedingly startled.

"Come here," repeated the elephant.

Now Joey knew elephants were pretty smart and could do all sorts of tricks, but he did *not* know they could *talk*. Indeed if one of the peanuts he was munching had bitten him he could not have been more surprised. So he just sat still and stared and stared.

"What's the matter with you?" asked the elephant, fretfully. "Don't you hear what I say?"

"Why—why yes," said Joey, "but I—I—I didn't know you *could* say—say things."

"Huh!" retorted the animal, "well I should think I could. Why I can speak three languages: American, Hindustani and elephant talk. And

THE FLYING ELEPHANT

now listen, I'm going back home where I used to live and I'd like to have you come along, for you've been awfully good to me."

"But," said Joey, "how can you go home when you are locked in a cage?"

"Oh, that's easy," said Woop, "all I have to do is to fly over the top like this."

And with that he gave a sort of hop, flapped his legs rapidly, and bing—over the top of the cage he came like a feather. Then the minute he got outside he twisted his trunk around Joey and placed him back of his ears. Then he cried: "Hold on tight!" gave another hop, flapped his legs again, kept on flapping them, and up into the air they sailed, right over the Zoological Gardens.

"Now," said Woop, "whatever else you do be sure and look at the view. I hope you're fond of scenery."

"Oh, yes," said Joey.

"I just love it," said Woop, "in fact, I don't know which I like best, scenery or peanuts."

So away they went across the city, over the riv-

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

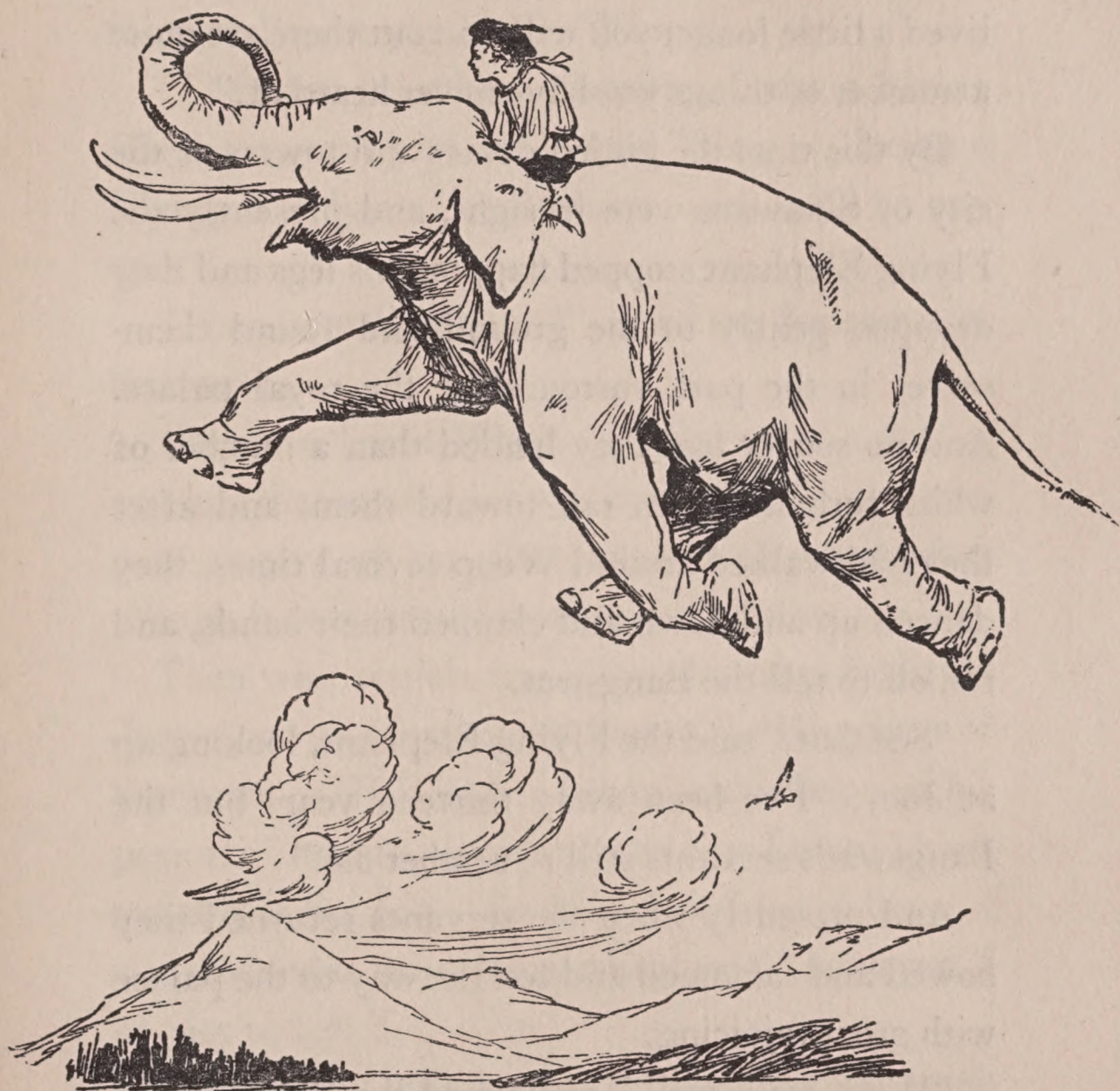
ers, over the mountains, and over the oceans like a German war balloon.

"You see," went on Woop, flapping his legs as though they were wound up, "I'm what you call a Flying Elephant, one of the rarest animals on earth, and I used to have a splendid job working for the Bangswat of Sumware. And then one day when I was on a picnic in the jungle these Zoological people caught me and made me work for them."

"Why, I never saw you work," said Joey. "Whenever I've been near your cage you seemed to be doing nothing."

"Well, isn't that work? Let me tell you that the hardest work of all is to do nothing. Now in the old days the Bangswat of Sumware employed me to do lighthouse cleaning, and I had every Thursday and every Sunday off. And as I recently got word that the elephant that took my place was foolish enough to join a circus, I'm going back to apply for the job again."

"But," said Joey, "how can an elephant do light house-cleaning? I never heard of such a thing."



Away they went over the mountains

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"Perhaps not," said Woop, "but after you've lived a little longer you will find out there are quite a number of things you have never heard of."

By this time the gilded domes and towers of the city of Sumware were in sight, and presently the Flying Elephant stopped flapping his legs and they dropped gently to the ground and found themselves in the park surrounding the royal palace. And no sooner had they landed than a number of white turbaned men ran toward them, and after they had walked around Woop several times, they danced up and down and clapped their hands, and ran off to tell the Bangswat.

"See that," said the Flying Elephant, looking up at Joey, "I've been away thirteen years but the Bangswat's servants still remember me."

And presently when the servants returned they bowed and salaamed and led the way to the palace with great rejoicing.

"Well, well, well," exclaimed the Bangswat of Sumware, as Woop entered the royal courtyard with Joey still perched back of his ears, "if this

THE FLYING ELEPHANT

isn't a dee-lightful surprise. I never, never thought I'd see you again, Woop."

"Then you must have forgotten I was a Flying Elephant, your highness," said Woop. "Being a Flying Elephant I could have come back at any time."

"Then why didn't you?" asked the Bangswat of Sumware.

"Because," said Woop, "I only heard a day or two ago that my old job was open, and I didn't propose to give up my place at the Zoo, unpleasant though it was, until I was sure of another."

Then whirling his trunk over his head he lifted Joey down and introduced him to the Bangswat of Sumware. "If it hadn't been for this boy and his peanuts," he said, "I don't know how I should have stood it at the Zoo. So when I decided to leave, I also decided to bring him with me, and I hope you'll be nice to him."

"I certainly will," said the Bangswat of Sumware, "and if he doesn't have a good time, it won't be my fault."

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Then he told Joey that any friend of Woop's was a friend of his. "You see," he went on, "Woop used to work for me years and years ago, or at least he was all ready for work when the work was ready for him."

"Why, what do you mean?" said Joey. "I thought you engaged him to do light housecleaning."

"I did," said the Bangswat of Sumware, "and the first time we go to the seashore he's going to do it."

"But," said Joey, "what has light housecleaning to do with the seashore? I should think he could do it anywhere."

"Of course I can't," put in the Flying Elephant. "How can I clean a lighthouse until I have a lighthouse to clean? And how can we get a lighthouse until we go to the seashore?"

"A lighthouse?" repeated Joey.

"Yes, a lighthouse. Don't you know what a lighthouse is? One of those tall, round things like a fat chimney, standing near the ocean, with a lamp on top."

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"Oh, I see," said Joey. "I thought you meant regular light housecleaning."

"Well, so we do," said the Bangswat of Sumware. "Goodness knows, cleaning a lighthouse is regular lighthouse cleaning if it's a regular lighthouse and you clean it in a regular way, isn't it?"

"Y—es," replied Joey, feeling rather confused, "I suppose so."

"Well, then," said Woop, crossly, "what are you fussing about?"

"Oh," said Joey, "I didn't mean to fuss. It only seemed so queer—"

"Dear me," interrupted the Bangswat of Sumware, "you'll get used to queer things after you've been here a few years."

"A few years?" echoed Joey, "Oh, I can't stay even one year. School starts soon and I simply *must* be on hand."

"Sakes alive," exclaimed Woop, "are you going to commence to fuss about that, too?"

"Yes," said the Bangswat of Sumware, "and besides you may *have* to go back shortly anyway."

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"Why, how is that?" asked the Flying Elephant.

"Well," said the Bangswat of Sumware, "the Imesore of Jumphi, a neighboring monarch, is spending the week-end at the palace and he is very mad at me. He has a daughter and he wants to marry her to my son, but as I haven't even a wife, let alone a son, he can't do it, and for that reason he threatens to make war on me. And of course you can't tell what will happen when there is a war."

"Phew!" said Woop, scratching his front left ankle with his right hind foot, "that's bad," and then suddenly he trumpeted excitedly. "I have it!" he cried. "Why not adopt Joey as your son and *he* can marry the Imesore of Jumphi's daughter."

"Fine!" shouted the Bangswat of Sumware, "I'll do it."

Well, you may be sure when Joey heard he was to be married to the daughter of the Imesore of Jumphi he felt very, very uneasy and wished he was back home again. He knew of course that lots of people got married and seemed to be glad about

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it, but as for himself he did not want to be married—not yet awhile, anyway. And even when he did get married he did not want to marry a young lady he had never seen. So he told the Bangswat of Sumware and the Flying Elephant just how he felt about it.

“That’s all right. I understand,” said the Bangswat of Sumware, “you’re nervous. But you’ll get over it.”

“Sure you will,” said Woop. “Everybody feels nervous at first. Of course *I’ve* never been married myself but I can easily *imagine* how you feel.”

And though Joey tried his best to explain that it was not nervousness because he was to be married, but nervousness for fear he *would* be, both the Bangswat of Sumware and the Flying Elephant seemed to take it as a joke and went into the palace laughing heartily.

“Oh, my gracious,” said Joey to himself, “whatever shall I do. However can I go back to school if I get married to the daughter of the Imesore of Jumphi? I know the teacher would think it aw-

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

fully queer, and I'm sure my father and mother would not like it at all. And—and I'm *not* going to be married and that's all there is to it."

Whereupon he marched into the palace to find the Bangswat of Sumware and tell him once more how he felt. However, the palace was large and it had a great many rooms and he simply could not find the Bangswat of Sumware. So presently hearing music in one of the apartments he opened the door and peeped in, and there, sitting on a heap of cushions, strumming upon a lute, was a fierce looking gentleman in a yellow silk gown, with a red turban on his head, and a glittering scimitar stuck in a sash about his waist. His eyes were black and, my, how they flashed as he sang:

Let those who wish be calm and kind,
To no such life am I inclined.
I have to quarrel all day and night,
And lose my temper with all my might.
I have to rage, and rave, and roar,
And tear my hair as I walk the floor;
And get so mad I cannot speak,
And sulk and frown for an entire week.

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For if I don't the doctors say
I'll soon be in an awful way.
So I lose my temper a la mode
For if I didn't I'd just explode.

As the stranger sang, Joey, growing more and more interested, edged further and further into the room, and finally when the song was over, he found himself right in front of the man on the cushions.

"Well," said the other, "how did you like it? Of course I made it up as I went along, but I think it had quite a dash, don't you?"

"Quite a dash," said Joey. "But do you really have to lose your temper the way you said in the song?"

"I certainly do," said the stranger, "and any one that knows the Imesore of Jumphi knows that I do."

"Oh," exclaimed Joey, "are you the Imesore of Jumphi?"

"Positively," replied the other, "and I suppose *you* are spending the week-end with the Bangswat of Sumware the same as I am. Are you royal?"

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"I—I—I don't know what you mean," said Joey.

"Why, is your blood blue?"

"No," said Joey, "it's red. That is, it always is when my nose bleeds."

"Hum," said the Imesore of Jumphi, "then you wouldn't do to marry my daughter. Her blood is a deep, rich blue and her temper is like a pack of fire-crackers. I just love to sit and watch her scratch and bite her governess."

"Oh," said Joey, "do you?"

Then he thought to himself that no matter what happened he would *not* marry the Imesore of Jumphi's daughter.

"Yes," went on the Imesore of Jumphi, "my daughter takes right after me. Indeed I think she's ahead of me when it comes to losing her temper. I'm sorry your blood is not blue so you could marry her but it doesn't matter, for I can easily marry her to the son of the Bangswat of Sumware."

"But," said Joey, "he hasn't got any son."

"He has, too," snapped the Imesore of Jumphi, "he just says that to be nasty."

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"Oh, no," said Joey, "really he hasn't. He told me so."

The Imesore of Jumphi rose to his feet and drew his scimitar. "He did, eh. Then the sooner war is declared the better. The idea of insulting my daughter that way."

With a frightful yell he rushed from the room and the moment he did so, out from *under* the cushions crawled the Bangswat of Sumware.

"Goodness!" exclaimed Joey, "were you under there all the time?"

"Yes," said the Bangswat of Sumware, "I was. I don't care for that person at all and wishing to avoid him I ran in here. And then as luck would have it he came in, too, and knowing if we saw each other that *I* might hurt *him*, I hid under the cushions and he has been sitting on me ever since."

"Then," said Joey, "you must have heard what he said about declaring war."

"Oh, yes," said the Bangswat of Sumware, "I heard, and I must say that it is all your fault that he has declared it. If you had only stayed outside the

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palace until I adopted you, you could have married his daughter, for your blood would have been blue by adoption, but now—we'll have a fine time."

And indeed it seemed as though they would, for suddenly the door burst open and in rushed Woop, the Flying Elephant, his eyes rolling with terror. "Run, run!" he gasped. "He's coming! He's coming!"

Instantly the Bangswat of Sumware dove beneath the cushions again, and Woop would have followed him only there were not enough cushions to go round.

"Oh me, oh my!" wailed the elephant, "where will we hide? He'll catch us sure."

And sure enough there was no place to hide, for the Imesore of Jumphi hated furniture and when he stayed at the palace would have nothing but cushions in the room he occupied. So there was nothing for Joey to do but to hide behind Woop, and nothing for Woop to do but hide behind Joey. And thus it was that the Imesore of Jumphi found them.

THE FLYING ELEPHANT

"Ah ha!" he shouted, waving his scimitar and showing as many of his teeth as he could, "where is the Bangswat of Sumware? Where is he, eh?"

Now Joey was just about as scared as he could be and Woop was even more scared, but neither one had the slightest intention of telling on the Bangswat of Sumware.

"Where is he, I say?" bawled the Imesore of Jumphi. With another slash of his scimitar he advanced toward Joey, and though Joey tried to get behind Woop he could not do it because Woop was behind *him*, and had backed into a corner.

"You—you—you go away," cried Joey to the Imesore of Jumphi in a trembling voice, "and—and—and don't you hit me with that thing or I'll—I'll—"

And then because he did not know what else to do he made a step *toward* the Imesore of Jumphi, and as he did so found out to his surprise just what a great many other people have found out, and that is, that the person who yells the loudest and seems to be the fiercest fighter, is not a fighter at all; for

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when he stepped *toward* the Imesore of Jumphi that gentleman gave a gasp and hopped *backward*. And instantly Joey knew that in spite of all the noise he made, the Imesore of Jumphi was a *coward*. And when Joey found *that* out he just gave the loudest screech he could and *rushed* at the Imesore of Jumphi, scimitar and all.

"Wow!" shrieked the Imesore of Jumphi, dropping his scimitar and making for the door.

"Scat!" yelled Joey, picking up the scimitar and rushing after him.

Down the royal corridor tore the Imesore of Jumphi with Joey after him. Out the palace door bounded the Imesore of Jumphi and across the royal park, Joey close at his heels, while the Bangswat of Sumware and Woop, the Flying Elephant, and all the court leaned out of the window and cheered like mad.

And presently when Joey, having chased the Imesore of Jumphi through the gate of the city, came back breathless but smiling, the Bangswat of Sumware fell on his neck and wept, and Woop

THE FLYING ELEPHANT

would have fallen on his neck too, only Joey was afraid to risk it.

“Talk about heroes,” said the Bangswat of Sumware, shaking Joey’s hand until it ached, “my dear sir, I shall erect a statue of you in the public square and as you grow old in our midst you will find that the Bangswat of Sumware never forgets a brave deed done in his behalf.”

But Joey shook his head. “Thank you very much,” he said, “I don’t mind the statue but I cannot grow old in your midst, because I’ve got to go home right away, I really have. I just happened to remember that my folks are going away and I’ve got to go with them.”

And though the Bangswat of Sumware coaxed and coaxed, Joey stuck to his plan, and so at last the Bangswat of Sumware told Woop to fly back home with him. “And then,” he said to the Flying Elephant, “you can return and do that lighthouse cleaning for me.”

“Ahem,” said Woop, “I could but I won’t. I’m very sorry to say it but the fact is I’m afraid that

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cleaning lighthouses would—er—er strain my tusks, and besides, I think I prefer peace and peanuts at the Zoological Gardens. The Imesore of Jumphi *might* come back, you know.”

So the next morning after a touching farewell scene with the Bangswat of Sumware, Joey and Woop set out for the Zoological Gardens.

“I suppose my folks will wonder where I’ve been,” said Joey, as Woop flapped his legs and they sailed along, “and I’m afraid they won’t believe it if I tell them.”

“Don’t you worry about that,” said Woop. “To be a Flying Elephant you’ve got to have more or less magical skill, and I’ll wish the clocks back so they’ll never know you’ve been away at all.”

And sure enough when they arrived at the Zoo and Woop was once more in his cage and Joey once more on his bench, it seemed as though nothing had happened, and that there had never been such a thing as a Flying Elephant. But of course you know differently for you have just finished reading all about it.

THE AMATEUR WITCH

Some witches are witches because they are born that way. And some witches are witches because they learn to be witches, and the ones that learn to be witches are the ones you want to look out for. They think they are very smart while they are learning and are always trying to show off, and to get ordinary people into trouble. And that is the sort of witch that Tod Blinker and his aunt, and six little cousins came across one day when they were on a picnic.

Tod was seven years old. His parents were dead and he lived with his aunt, who was a widow, and her six children; and as it crowded the house pretty well when they were all at home, his aunt always liked to go to the country on a picnic whenever the weather was fine.

"Not that I care so much for picnics," she used to say, "but it's better to go picnicking than go crazy,

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which is what I shall do if I stay in a three room cottage much longer with seven children.”

And after that she always used to add that she was going to put Tod in an orphanage, which made him very sad, for he much preferred to stay with his aunt and cousins even though it was crowded.

Well, the picnic they went on this time was held in a pretty little spot where the grass was green and a group of trees made a shady place to sit down and eat their luncheon, and everything was going along finely, when just as they were thinking it was about time to spread their luncheon, up came a thunder shower and wet them all to the skin, just as it often seems to do when a person goes on a picnic. And not only did it wet them but it kept on wetting them so that they all began to run to see if they could not find shelter of some sort.

Presently when they were so wet it seemed as though they could not be wetter, they came to a cottage with a small garden in the rear, and knocking at the door, asked for shelter.

“What,” said the queer old woman who an-



Some witches are witches because they are born that way.

THE AMATEUR WITCH

swered the knock, "come in my nice dry cottage dripping that way? Never! But I'll tell you what you can do, go in the back garden and hang by your hands on my clothes line, and you will soon dry off."

"Dry off," repeated Tod's aunt, indignantly, "with it raining in bucketfuls? What nonsense!"

"Oh, I'll fix that all right," said the old woman.

Whereupon she snapped her fingers, and bing—out came the sun as hot and brilliant as ever, while the rain stopped as though some one had turned it off.

"Now," said the owner of the cottage, "go and hang yourselves on my clothes line and you'll be dry in a jiffy."

And that is just what happened. Yes, sir-ee, no sooner had Tod and his aunt and his six little cousins grasped the old woman's clothes line and hung there a moment, than they were as dry as a bone, but when they wanted to let go, ah, that was another thing, for they simply could not do it. And my, how they all yelled when they found they could

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not. And my, how the old woman laughed at them.

"Serves you right," she cackled, "for bothering a witch."

"Oh," stammered Tod, "are—are—are you a witch?"

"Certainly I am," snapped the owner of the cottage, "and a mighty smart one, too, for not only have I got you all fast on my clothes line, but I'll soon have you properly shrunken for pickling, also."

And when Tod's aunt and his cousins heard her say that, they carried on worse than ever.

"Be still! Be still!" commanded the witch, stamping her foot. "Did I ever hear such a fuss over nothing?"

"A fuss over nothing?" shrieked Tod's aunt. "Do you suppose we're accustomed to hanging to a clothes line like this? We're respectable people."

"Boo hoo! We want to go home," wailed Tod's six little cousins.

But all the witch did was to take hold of Tod,

THE AMATEUR WITCH

snap her fingers again and pull him off the line.

"Go and get me a bucket of water at once," she said.

And when Tod brought the water she soaked his aunt and his cousins from head to foot.

"I must get you shrunk down to about three inches," she said, "before I can pickle you."

And when they shuddered she cackled again, and told Tod that after she was through with his relatives she would attend to him also.

Well, you may be sure if there was an unhappy boy it was Tod. Even though his aunt had wanted to put him in an orphanage, he was still quite fond of her, and now that she was in danger of being pickled he was twice as fond of her. And when he thought of his six little cousins being pickled also, and maybe himself, it just seemed more than he could stand.

"See here," he cried to the witch, "what do you mean by acting this way? We never did anything to you. You seem to have an awfully mean disposition."

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"I have," replied the witch, proudly, "and it is getting worse every day. The meaner your disposition the greater the witch you are. I suppose *you* have a good disposition."

"Well," said Tod, "I have a better one than you."

"I don't see why," replied the witch. "If *my* aunt talked about putting *me* in an orphanage *I'd* have a real mean disposition so far as she was concerned. And yet I suppose *you* would like to keep her from being pickled, wouldn't you?"

"Yes," said Tod, "I would."

"Well, you wont," replied the owner of the cottage. "You'll just keep on soaking your aunt and cousins until they are small enough to pickle. That's what I pulled you off the line for." And with that she walked into her house and shut the door.

Tod looked at his aunt and his aunt looked at him. "Don't you *dare* to soak us," she said, kicking this way and that in an effort to get loose.

"I don't intend to," said Tod.



Tod looked at his aunt and his aunt looked at him

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"I should think not," snapped his aunt. "You go off at once and get a policeman or something."

So Tod hurried away to see if he could find a policeman but the only person he came across was a little, white haired gentleman chasing bugs in a field with a bottle in his hand.

"Have you seen any policemen about here?" inquired Tod.

"Policemen?" replied the old gentleman, politely, "no, not that I remember. Are you collecting them?"

"Collecting them?" said Tod, "of course not. What a silly question."

"'Tisn't silly at all," snapped the stranger. "A person can collect anything they want to, can't they? I suppose the next thing you'll say it's silly for me to collect bugs."

"Well," replied Tod, "I *don't* see much sense in it."

The old gentleman sniffed. "Indeed, not even when I tell you that they are potato bugs, eh?"

"No," said Tod, "I don't."

THE AMATEUR WITCH

"Then," said the other, "you are very ignorant or else very wealthy and perfectly indifferent to the present price of potatoes. Potatoes are worth their weight in gold, and potato bugs are worth even more than that. That is why I am collecting them."

"Oh, is it?" said Tod.

"Yes," continued the old gentleman, "it is. And when I have collected ten thousand of the insects, what shall I do with them?"

"I don't know," said Tod.

Once more the old gentleman sniffed. "I knew you'd say that. Well, I shall distribute them among the poor. One to each family."

"What for?" asked the boy.

"What for? Why, so the poor may have potatoes. It's this way. A potato bug *must* have potatoes and so must the poor. I give a bug to a poor family, then they turn it loose and follow wherever it goes. If anything can find a potato a potato bug can, and when it finds it the poor family grabs the potato and starts the bug hunting for more. You

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

see, I'm what is known as a Philanthropist. I'm always trying to help others."

"Then," said Tod, "maybe you'll help me."

And with that he told the old gentleman all about his aunt and his cousins, and how the witch had caught them. "I must rescue them," he added, "and I must do it quick or they will be pickled. Couldn't you let your bugs wait awhile and help me?"

"Why, yes," said the old gentleman, "I suppose I could. In fact, I will."

Whereupon he put his bottle in his pocket, took Tod by the arm and started for the witch's cottage. "No doubt," he said, "you think I'm an odd fish, but we must all have our pastimes, you know. Or to put it poetically:

A hobby is a funny thing—
Some sit and gossip, dance, or sing.
Some golf, or swim or row a boat—
Some don't do anything but vote.

In fact, we all have different ways
Of filling in our idle days.

THE AMATEUR WITCH

Some dote on oriental rugs—
I much prefer potato bugs.

And each one thinks his hobby best
And cannot understand the rest.
His fond delusion tight he hugs—
And so—I hunt potato bugs.

Presently they reached the gate of the witch's garden and Tod hurried the Philanthropist inside to show how his aunt and cousins were hanging on the clothes line. "See," he began, as they turned the corner of the cottage. And then he stopped and stared, and stared, for his aunt and his cousins and the clothes line had completely disappeared.

"Hum," said the old gentleman, with a frown, "I've often heard that boys were fond of fooling folks."

"No, no," cried Tod, "really I haven't been trying to fool you. They were all here a little while ago. Some one must have taken them away." Then he gave a shout and clutched the old gentleman's arm convulsively. "Oh, I wonder if the witch took them indoors to pickle them."

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The Philanthropist rolled up his eyes and scratched his chin thoughtfully. "Perhaps she did, and then again, perhaps she didn't. I always look at both sides of a question and rarely make a mistake."

Then he asked Tod whether his aunt and his cousins had their luncheon with them.

"Oh, yes," said Tod, "when we go on picnics my aunt always carries the luncheon in her knitting bag fastened to her waist. And she was awfully angry when it got wet."

"Hum," said the old gentleman, "and what did the luncheon consist of?"

"Well," said Tod, "there was potato salad, and——"

"Enough," bawled the Philanthropist, hopping up and down with excitement.

Then he took his bottle of potato bugs from his pocket, selected quite a large potato bug and let it go. "Watch it," he said, "for where that bug goes is where your aunt is. A potato bug can find potato salad the same as plain potatoes."

THE AMATEUR WITCH

So Tod and the Philanthropist, quivering with expectation watched the big, fat, striped potato bug crawl and fly, crawl and fly, until at last what did it do but go right through the keyhole in the front door of the witch's cottage.

"I knew it! I knew it!" said the old gentleman, rubbing his hands, gleefully. "My dear sir, a potato bug is the greatest invention of the age."

With that he rang the witch's doorbell violently. "I'll be polite at first," he said, "and then if she gets sassy I'll give her a piece of my mind."

Ting-a-ling! Ting-a-ling! went the doorbell, but no one came.

"Maybe she isn't at home," suggested Tod.

"Maybe not," said the Philanthropist, "but even if she isn't, your aunt's luncheon is, for you can't fool a potato bug. And I guess wherever your aunt's luncheon is, your aunt and your cousins are also."

"Oh, yes," said Tod, "they don't like to be separated."

"Then," said the old gentleman, "whether the

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witch is home or not, your aunt and cousins are, and if some one does not answer the bell we'll burst in the door."

But some one did answer the bell. Yes, sir-ee, the witch answered the bell. All of a sudden she jerked the door open, and jerked Tod and the Philanthropist inside and into the parlor before they knew what was happening to them.

"Now," she said, "what do you mean by ringing my doorbell in such a manner?"

And then the Philanthropist told her quite politely that they had called to take Tod's aunt and cousins home.

"Indeed," sneered the witch, "well, they are not going home, at least not until they are pickled, and after that I guess they'll be ashamed to go home." And she cackled very disagreeably.

"Madam," thundered the Philanthropist, "you are no lady. I shall now give you a piece of my mind."

And he did—quite a large piece, too, while Tod sat with his mouth open and the witch almost

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panted with rage as she tried to get a word in edgewise.

"Stop! Stop!" she shrieked at last, "and you shall go up to the garret to see this miserable boy's miserable aunt and her children."

"Good," said the old gentleman, "lead the way."

And presently Tod and the Philanthropist stood in the garret looking sorrowfully at Tod's aunt and his six cousins still hanging to the clothes line, which was stretched from one corner of the room to another, in company with several strings of onions and a ham or two.

"Gracious goodness!" groaned Tod's aunt, when she saw the boy, "haven't you found a policeman yet?"

"No," said Tod, "but I found a Philanthropist."

"What's that?" asked Tod's aunt. "Can he arrest people?"

"No," put in the old gentleman, "I do *not* arrest people—I help them; and I shall now help you by taking you away from this stuffy old place." He

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turned to the witch. "And don't you try to stop me, either."

The witch smiled a very queer smile. "Of course not. Not for the world. You can't take 'em away too quick for me."

Then she told Tod to untie one end of the clothes line and the old gentleman the other. And then the moment they touched the rope to untie it, she snapped her fingers, and bing—there was Tod and the Philanthropist fastened to the clothes line by their hands also.

"Ho, ho, ho," laughed the witch, pointing her finger at Tod and the old gentleman, "I thought you were going to take them home."

"You—you—you—" stammered the Philanthropist. "What do you mean by such behavior? Let us loose at once!"

But all the witch did was to go out and slam the door after her.

"Cheese and crackers!" exclaimed the old gentleman, "do you suppose she is actually going to leave me here this way?"

THE AMATEUR WITCH

"Of course she is," snapped Tod's aunt, "why not? You're no better than I am."

"But—but—" began the Philanthropist, "I have at least eight thousand more potato bugs to collect. I have no time to hang upon a clothes line."

"Humph!" said Tod's aunt, "nor have I. I have my house-cleaning to do and about eight thousand pairs of stockings to darn."

"Oh, please," put in Tod, "don't let us quarrel about it. Let's see—"

"I *shall* quarrel about it," interrupted the old gentleman, angrily. "I *shall* quarrel about it, I tell you. And the less you say the better. If it hadn't been for you I'd be chasing bugs instead of hanging here."

"Indeed," said Tod's aunt, glaring at the Philanthropist, "well, go off and chase your bugs, we don't want you."

"Boo hoo!" wailed Tod's six little cousins, all kicking at once, "we want to go home."

"Oh, dear," said Tod to himself, "it does seem

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

as though all of us were quite sour enough to pickle *ourselves*."

And though he did not know it, that was the very reason the witch had hung them on the clothes line, for she knew if they hung there long enough they would get sourer and sourer and finally *would* pickle themselves.

But as you know, just when things seem to be at their very worst, they often turn about and get to be their best, and that is what happened in this case, for as Tod, swinging miserably to and fro, happened to glance out of the attic window, what did he see but another witch on her broomstick flying straight for the window, and in another moment she was in the room. She seemed to be much older than the witch who had caught them and not so unpleasant-looking. She climbed off her broomstick and rubbed her eyes.

"Hoity toity!" she exclaimed, looking at the gloomy string on the clothes line, "what does this mean?"

And immediately everybody on the clothes line

THE AMATEUR WITCH

began to tell her as fast as they could, which was rather confusing.

"Stop!" she commanded. Then she turned to Tod. "You don't seem as excited as the rest. You tell me."

And by the time Tod had gotten through with his story the witch was almost as excited as any one.

"Of all the outrageous things I ever heard," she said, "this is the worst."

Then she went downstairs and brought up the other witch and made her apologize to everybody on the clothes line. And after that she snapped her fingers and set Tod, and his aunt, and his cousins and the Philanthropist free in a jiffy.

"This person," she said, pointing to the witch who had captured them, "is merely a learner—an amateur, in the art of witchcraft. Wishing to help her in her studies I allowed her to use my cottage while I was away, and this is what she does. She is a disgrace to the profession and I shall have her expelled from the Society of Witches, you may be sure."

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

Then she told Tod, and his aunt and his cousins, and the old gentleman that no experienced witch would have done such a thing. "There was a time," she added, "when we might have, but nowadays no one can fly in the face of public opinion. No, sir-ee, the public *must* be considered in every way, and we never think of harming any one unless he thoroughly deserves it. Which of course you do not, do you?"

"NO!" shouted Tod, and his aunt and his cousins and the Philanthropist, as loud as they could.

Then the older witch offered to send them all home on her broomstick, but they said they preferred to *walk*, but they must have been mistaken in that, for as soon as they got outside the cottage they all started to *run* as fast as they could; the old gentleman in one direction, and Tod, and his aunt and his cousins in another.

And what became of the Philanthropist, Tod or his aunt or his cousins never knew. And what became of Tod and his relatives the Philanthropist

THE AMATEUR WITCH

never knew, but there is no doubt that all of them reached their homes safely.

As for the amateur witch she got just what she deserved and had a terrible time making a living and before she got through making it, probably found out to her sorrow that she was not half as smart as she thought she was.

THE BOUNCING BOY

Once there was a boy named Nim who was the most unusual little chap you could imagine, for he was what is known as a bouncing boy. Now most people when they speak of a bouncing boy mean a boy who is healthy and full of energy, but in the case of Nim it meant more than that. Yes indeed, it meant that he really was a bouncer and could bounce just as though he was made of india-rubber.

Of course, every boy's father and mother wish him to be a bouncing boy in a way, but too much bounce is as bad as no bounce at all, and the trouble with Nim was, he had too much bounce; in fact, he was all bounce. When he was a year old, if you dropped him it did not hurt him at all; all he did was to bounce. And if you dropped him hard enough, he would bounce clear up to the ceiling.

Well, of course, until Nim was able to walk and understand what people said, he did not know he

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was a bouncer, and even then he only found it out gradually, for his parents were very careful to keep it secret, as they felt it was a sort of disgrace. But Nim did not mind it at all, and by the time he was seven he bounced himself whenever he got the chance, and as a consequence was the envy of every boy in the neighborhood, for just think of a boy who could jump off his doorstep and the minute he touched the sidewalk, bounce ten feet in the air. And, of course, when Nim saw how the other boys admired him he tried to show off more than ever, until at last his father told him it must stop.

"The first thing you know," said Nim's father, "you'll hurt yourself, or bounce out of sight, or something. And if you don't behave yourself I shall simply keep you indoors."

But, nevertheless, although Nim did try to behave himself, and mind his parents, the bounce in him was too strong to be resisted, and as the weeks passed he became more and more reckless.

One day he jumped from the top of the school porch and it made him bounce almost thirty feet

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

and did not hurt him at all. And when he found that high jumps did not hurt him, he became still more reckless, and finally one day he climbed to the roof of his father's barn and waving his cap to the crowd of boys below, gave a yell and jumped. And then maybe he did not bounce! Bing—he hit the ground, his heels dug into the grass, and then, bing—he shot up into the air about *two miles*.

Now it is one thing to bounce thirty feet and quite another to bounce two miles, for when you bounce thirty feet you generally come down where you started from, but when you bounce two miles you are liable to come down anywhere. And that is just what happened to Nim. He came down in a place he had never seen before. At first he could not tell what kind of a place it was, for when he landed he bounced up again about a mile. Then he fell back and bounced half a mile; then a quarter of a mile; then a thousand feet, then a hundred feet, until at last, bouncing less each time, he did not bounce at all, and finally had a chance to look around him. And when he did look about



When you bounce two miles you are liable to come
down anywhere.

THE BOUNCING BOY

he found he was surrounded by a whole lot of children, boys and girls of all sizes, dozens and dozens of them.

"Hello," he said.

"Hello," responded the children. "Do it again."

"Do what again?" asked Nim.

"Why, bounce yourself," said a fat little boy with a front tooth missing.

"No," said Nim, "I've bounced quite enough for the present."

"Boo hoo!" bawled the fat little boy, "I want you to bounce."

"Boo hoo!" bawled all the rest of the children, "we want you to bounce, too."

And my, what a noise they made all crying at once. They crowded around Nim and pulled at him and pushed him, and he was beginning to think he *would* have to bounce again even though he did not want to, when suddenly a queer looking old lady pushed her way through the throng and confronted him.

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"Well, well," she cried, "what have you done to 'em now, eh?"

"I haven't done anything," said Nim.

"He has, too," shouted the fat little boy. "He won't bounce himself. Do make him bounce himself."

"*Can* you bounce yourself?" asked the old lady, who was as fat an old lady as the fat little boy was a fat little boy.

"Yes," said Nim, "but I—"

"Then do it," snapped the old lady. "Isn't it bad enough to live in a shoe and have so many children you don't know what to do, without having them cry all at once? Bounce yourself right off."

So Nim gave a jump in the air and then let himself come down and bounce, and my, how the children laughed and clapped their hands. But when he tried to stop they all began to cry again, and so he kept on bouncing until he was pretty nearly ready to drop.

"See here," he said to the old lady, as he paused to get his breath, "I'm willing to amuse your chil-



Nim gave a jump in the air

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dren for a while but I'm not going to do it all the time whether they cry or not." And with that he sat down on a grassy knoll and fanned himself with his cap.

"That's all right," said the old lady, "I don't want you to do it *all* the time, because *sometimes* they have to eat their meals and *sometimes* they have to go to bed, but at other times if bouncing will keep them quiet, I think the least you can do is to bounce, don't you?"

"No," said Nim, "I don't."

"You don't," said the old lady, "then what did you come here for, I'd like to know."

Whereupon Nim told her how he had jumped off his father's barn and bounced two miles in the air. "I suppose," he added, "that is the reason I came down in the wrong place."

"The wrong place," echoed the old lady. "That's a nice way to talk. This isn't the wrong place, it's the right place or I wouldn't live here with all of my children."

"Well," said Nim, "maybe it is, but it isn't the

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sort of a place I've been used to. People don't live in shoes where I live; they live in houses."

"Indeed," snapped the old lady, "well, let me tell you I wouldn't live in a house for *anything*. I believe in doing my duty, I do. Suppose little Jack Horner had sat in a corner eating his Christmas pie and put in his thumb and pulled out a cherry instead of a plum, wouldn't it have ruined the nursery poem?"

"Y—es," said Nim, "I suppose it would."

"Well," continued the old lady, "if I lived in a house instead of a shoe with so many children I didn't know what to do, wouldn't that have ruined another nursery poem?"

"But—but," responded Nim, "you're not *that* old lady, are you? I thought you just *happened* to live in a shoe. I never thought you were the shoe lady in the nursery rhyme."

"Well, I am," replied the other, "and you needn't call it a rhyme, either. It's a poem if ever there was one. Perhaps you never heard it properly rendered. Listen."

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

Throwing back her shoulders and taking a dramatic pose, she began:

There was an old lady who lived in a shoe,
And the children she had gave her plenty to do,
For oh, there were dozens, both fat ones and thin,
And a shoe is quite awkward to pack children in.
And every one vowed it was useless to try
But the old lady said she would do it or die;
So into the shoe she jammed 'em in time
And gave to the world a fine nursery rhyme.

"There," said the old lady, when she had finished, "that's the way it ought to be. Do you like it?"

"Very much," replied Nim, "but I thought you said it wasn't a rhyme and yet the last line of the poem says: 'gave to the world a fine nursery rhyme.'"

"Well, I'll tell you," said the old lady, "I think the way that happened was because the poet had to have a rhyme for time. Anyway it's a poem no matter how it rhymes. And now you can start in and bounce for the children again."

"No," said Nim, "I'm not going to do it. I've

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bounced for them a lot and I'm not going to do it any more."

"Very well," said the old lady, "then I'll report you to the King."

"You can report me to anybody you wish," said Nim, "but I will not bounce another bounce."

"Just as you say," responded the old lady.

Then she took Nim by the hand and led the way through a strip of woodland with all the children following her until she came to an enormous shoe that looked like new and which was roofed over like a cottage and surrounded by a garden.

"Good gracious," gasped Nim, "whoever wears a shoe like that?"

"That," said the old lady, proudly, "used to belong to the King."

"The King," echoed Nim. "Phew! He must be a giant."

"Not at all," responded the old lady.

"But—but—" stammered Nim, "what does he wear shoes like that for?"

"He doesn't *wear* 'em," said the old lady, "or at

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least he hasn't yet. He only has his shoes made that way because he has very tender feet and wants to be sure they won't be too tight if he goes out walking. But as he never does go out walking the only thing he ever wears on his feet are his carpet slippers, so when I need a new shoe he lets me have one of his. And now you wait a moment while I put the children to bed."

With that she opened a door in the heel of the shoe and went inside, only to appear the next moment with several buckets of porridge and a huge spoon. And the minute the children saw her do that they formed a long line and as each one passed into the shoe she gave the child a spoonful of the gruel, and then licking the spoon, tossed it into one of the buckets, locked the door, and, snatching a clean apron and a fresh sunbonnet from a line near by, she took Nim by the hand once more and set off for the royal palace.

"You're awfully foolish," she said, "to put me to all this trouble, for even if you won't bounce for me, you'll have to bounce for the King, you know."

THE BOUNCING BOY

"I'm not going to bounce for anybody," said Nim.

"But," cried the old lady, "if you don't bounce for the King how will he know you *can* bounce?"

"I don't care whether he knows it or not," said the boy.

"Well, I do," snapped the old lady, "because if you don't bounce how can I report you for not bouncing? The King will not believe you're a bouncer until you do it. See?"

"He can believe it or not," said Nim, "just as he likes. I am not going to bounce, I tell you."

But he did bounce, just the same, yes sir-ee. For after they reached the palace and the old lady had told the King all about Nim, the monarch did not ask him to bounce at all. He just commanded two of his soldiers to lift the boy high in the air and let him drop, and of course, when Nim dropped he bounced despite himself. And when he did that the King came down from his throne with a very eager look on his face.

"What *makes* you bounce?" he asked.

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"I don't know," replied Nim.

"Fine!" shouted the King. "Another mystery to solve."

Then he told Nim that the one passion of his life was to find out the mysterious something that made people and things do what they did. "There isn't a mystery in my kingdom that I haven't solved," he went on, "and I was just longing for a new one, and here you are. Welcome, my dear sir, welcome!"

"Then I don't have to bounce for the shoe lady any longer?" asked Nim.

"I should say *not*," replied the monarch. "You are now a member of the royal household—a delightfully mysterious one—to be studied over by myself and finally solved, I hope." Then he waved his hand to the old lady and commanded her to go away.

"Oh, please, your majesty," replied the old lady, "do let me stick around and see the fun."

"Well," said the King. "I don't mind, if you really want to do it."

THE BOUNCING BOY

"What does she mean—see the fun?" asked Nim, turning to the monarch.

"Oh, she just wants to wait about until the time comes to open you."

"*Open* me?" exclaimed Nim, in an alarmed tone. "Why—why I never heard of such a thing. Why—why I can't be opened."

"Oh yes, you can," replied the King, pleasantly. "You may not think so, but I can open you very nicely. You have no idea how many things I've opened during my reign. Now take a clock, for instance. I used to wonder what made a clock tick, but after I opened several I soon found out, you may be sure. And while there is only one of you to open, I think I will certainly find out what makes you bounce, yes indeed."

Well, you can imagine when Nim heard *that* he wished he had continued bouncing for the old lady's children, because now he was in a worse fix than ever.

"I think," he said, turning to the old lady, "that I'll go back and assist you with the children. You

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do have a hard time amusing them and I *ought* to help you if I can."

"Maybe she does," said the King, "but I have a hard time amusing myself also, and I think you ought to help *me*."

"No," said Nim, firmly, "the children need me more than you."

"They do *not*," bawled the monarch, angrily. "And besides, what is the use of being a mystery if you are not to be solved. The idea of wasting your time on children."

"But," insisted Nim, desperately, "I *love* children."

"And I love mysteries," retorted the King, "and I'm going to open you and find out what makes you bounce if it costs me my throne."

And with that he shouted for his servants to bring in the royal tool chest, and when they did so he began to select some very unpleasant looking things from it.

"If you had looked at the matter from a scientific point of view as I do," he said, trying the edge of

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a chisel carefully, "I should not have attempted to solve your mystery until to-morrow or the next day, but as it is, the less time lost the better. Kindly step *this* way, if you please."

Now Nim was as brave as most boys are, but when a person says he is going to open you and brings out a carpenters' chest of tools to do it with, there is no use to try to keep from being scared, because you cannot do it. Therefore, when the King said to step *this* way, it is not surprising that Nim stepped the *other* way, and just as quick as he could. In fact, he did not *step*, he *jumped*, he *leaped*, and ran out of the room as fast as he could and up the royal staircase to the top of the palace, with the King, and the old lady, and the King's soldiers after him.

Up, up, they went, two and three steps at a time, Nim running as he had never run before, and the monarch, and the old lady, and the guards, shouting, and puffing and panting after him, until at last the palace roof was reached. And then Nim felt he was safe, for just as his pursuers rushed to

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seize him, he leaped from the edge of the roof to the garden below.

Whiz, down, down he went! Bing, he hit the ground, and then, bing—up he bounced, up, up, almost *three* miles into the air. And after *that* you can guess what happened, for as already told you, when you bounce thirty feet in the air you are liable to come down where you started from, but when you bounce *miles* you are liable to come down *anywhere*.

And so it was that when Nim did come down he came down right in front of his father's house, and after bouncing and bouncing, less and less each time, finally stopped bouncing altogether, and walked indoors and greeted his folks just as they were sitting down to dinner.

"*Well*," said his father, "so you came back at last, did you? I thought *this* time you never would."

"I thought so, too," said Nim, with a shudder. "It was dreadful."

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"Then," said his mother, "perhaps you'll be more careful in the future."

"I certainly shall," said Nim. "In fact, I'll never, never bounce again."

And he never did. No matter how much his friends tried to coax him to, he never did. For *you* know, even though his father and mother, and his friends do not, what an awful fix his bouncing almost got him into.

THE UNAPPEASABLE BOY CATCHER

Once there was a boy named Vym who moved with his parents from a distant town to the quaint old city of Pudge. Now of course the first thing that Vym did after his parents got settled in Pudge was to look around for some other boys to play with, but while he found a number of little girls, scarcely a boy was to be seen, and the few that he did come across could not be coaxed out of doors.

"I wonder why it is," said Vym to his father and mother.

They said they did not know but would ask the neighbors, and when they did ask the neighbors they received the astonishing information that it was not safe for boys to play outdoors in Pudge on account of Zylograb, the Unappeasable Boy Catcher, who had his residence there.

"Of course," said the neighbors to Vym's father



THE UNAPPEASABLE BOY CATCHER

and mother, "if you can trust your boy to play right in front of your home and not go snooping around where Zylograb lives, it will be all right, but our experience is that boys will be boys and will snoop no matter what you tell them."

Well, of course the moment Vym heard about the Unappeasable Boy Catcher, he was most anxious to get a look at the gentleman, but at the same time he did not want to be caught by him. However, his father and mother did not think it was necessary that he see Zylograb at all and insisted that he stay in the house, or at least not go further than the front step. But after Vym had done this for about two weeks, he became so restless he just felt that he *must* go out and wander about a bit, even though Zylograb did catch him.

So one afternoon while his father was at business and his mother downtown shopping, he put on his cap and went to the front door determined to take a *little* walk anyway, and go past the Unappeasable Boy Catcher's house very quick just to see what it looked like. But as he started down

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the steps he remembered he did not know in which direction the house was.

"Pshaw!" he said to himself, "isn't that too bad. Well, anyway I'll walk up to the corner of the street and stretch my legs."

When he got to the corner he did what most everybody does at corners, he looked around it, and there a short distance off he saw what seemed to be a castle surrounded by beautiful gardens. And of course the minute he saw that he wanted to see more of it, and presently found himself standing in front of what he thought must certainly be the king's palace, for through the golden, glittering fence he could see the most wonderful flowers and fruit trees, to say nothing of sparkling fountains, and such things.

"Gee whiz!" exclaimed Vym, "it must be fine in there."

And then seeing that the gate was wide open with the sign "welcome" over it, he walked inside and along the beautiful marble pavement that led to the palace. And before he had gone a hun-

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dred feet, clash, the gate swung shut behind him. Vym, very much startled, turned just in time to see an old man, all bent over, fastening the gate with a huge padlock.

"What are you doing that for?" he asked, as the old man hobbled toward him.

"Oh," said the other, "I'm just completing the welcome." With that he swept off his cap and made Vym a low bow. "If I left the gate open you might think we did not want you to stay."

"All the same," said Vym, "I wish you would open it so I can get out quick if the king comes. I didn't intend to stay."

"What nonsense," said the old man, "the king never comes here. This is an enchanted palace; now you see it and now you don't."

"What do you mean?" asked Vym.

"Well," continued the old man, "it's this way. If your folks got word about you and tried to find out where you were, they couldn't, because no matter how much they looked they couldn't see this place. And yet, if you weren't inside, they could.

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That's what I mean by, now you see it and now you don't."

"But—but—" stammered the boy, "where am I? This isn't—this isn't—don't tell me this is the house of Zylograb, the Boy Catcher."

"All right, I won't," said the old man. "I always try to oblige people. But if you don't want to know what the place is, I don't suppose you'd mind knowing who I am."

"Oh, no," said Vym.

"Well, I'm Bunk, the gardener, and I'm very, very, very, *very* sorry for you." Holding his handkerchief to his eyes he wept and wept.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Vym, "I must be in an awful fix for you to do that, and this *must* be the house of the Unappeasable Boy Catcher."

"Boo hoo! Boo hoo!" sobbed the gardener, "oh, boo hoo! I'm *so* sorry for you because it is, and you being a boy he'll certainly insist upon adding you to his collection."

"To his collection," repeated Vym. "I don't understand."

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"Well," said Bunk, "Zylograb has a fancy for collecting boys, just like boys often have a fancy for collecting stamps and such things. He has immense sheets of sticky enchanted paper, and when he gets hold of a boy he sticks him on a sheet and labels him. Then after a bit he may trade him off to another collector of boys, if there are any more."

"Oh," gasped Vym, "isn't— isn't that dreadful?"

"I suppose it is," said the gardener, wiping the tears off the end of his nose, "but it's very scientific too, so they say."

Then he told Vym that Zylograb was away just at that time, but that his grandmother, an extremely nice aged ogress was in the castle. "Now," he continued, "suppose we do this. Let's go to the castle and see Zylograb's grandmother, and I'll tell her that hearing about the collection of boys, you have come to look it over, thinking maybe you might like to join. Then we will see what happens after that."

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"But," said Vym, "I don't want to join and I don't like ogresses."

"Perhaps not," said Bunk, "but really, she is worth seeing anyhow. She has a head as big as a barrel and teeth like a saw, and she takes a *frightful* interest in the boys when Zylograb is not there to do it himself."

"Oh, she does, does she?" said Vym, nervously.

"Yes," replied the old man, "she seems to be fond of boys and can't understand why they are not fond of her."

"Huh!" said Vym. "I never could be fond of any person like that."

"Maybe you could," said Bunk, "after you came to know her."

"No," said Vym, "it would not make any difference how much I knew her."

Then he jumped to his feet, from the rustic bench where he had been sitting with the old man, and ran to the gate and shook and pounded upon it. "Help! Help!" he yelled.

"Ssh! Don't make so much noise," said Bunk.

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"It's very dangerous to create a disturbance on enchanted ground. You are liable to be turned into almost anything. And besides, here comes Zylograb's grandmother anyhow, so you might as well make the best of things."

Sure enough the aged ogress was hurrying down the castle steps and beckoning to them with a bony forefinger.

"I guess we had better go to her," said the old man. "It will only make her mad if we don't."

And Vym, when he saw that if he did not go to the ogress, the ogress would come to him, turned away from the gate and presently found himself sitting in the castle parlor.

"This boy," said Bunk, to Zylograb's grandmother, "is named Vym. Hearing that Zylograb had such a large and interesting collection of boys he thought he would like to join it, provided the collection was as interesting as he had heard it was."

"Dear me," said the ogress, turning to Vym, "now isn't that too delightful for anything."

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Most of the boys in the collection had to be taken unawares and brought here. None of them were so thoughtful as to come before they were caught." Then she gave Vym a pat on the head that made his teeth rattle. "My, my, but my grandson will be touched—deeply touched—when he hears what you have done. And as for myself I can hardly express my feelings, but I'll do my best, so listen:

For years and years, and still more years,
I've pasted boys dissolved in tears
Upon the sticky paper where
We keep them, with the utmost care.
I've pasted boys who kicked like mad—
I've pasted good boys—pasted bad.
I've pasted some so stiff with fright
'Twas hard to make them stick on tight.
In fact, I've pasted every kind
Of every sort of boy you'll find
Except the sort you seem to be.
And you're the sort of boy for me—
The one who asks with cheerful face
That I should paste him in his place.

"But," said Vym, when she had finished, "I'm not asking you to paste me—"

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"That's all right," responded the ogress, smiling and showing at least eighty-five of her saw-like teeth, "I understand."

Then she took Vym and Bunk into a tremendously large room and showed them what a really fine collection of boys Zylograb had. And maybe Vym did not stare when he saw it. And maybe the boys did not stare when they saw Vym.

The boys with red hair were all pasted together on one big sheet of paper. The boys with freckles were all on another, and the boys with turned up noses on another. The fat boys were on one sheet and the thin boys on another, and so on, so that you could see the different varieties of boys without straining your eyes. It was a most interesting sight and Vym almost forgot he was a boy himself until the ogress pointed out the sheet of paper where he would be pasted when the Unappeasable Boy Catcher came home.

"But," said Vym, "I haven't decided to join the collection yet, you know."

The ogress smiled and winked one eye at Bunk.

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Then she turned and winked the other eye at all the boys on the sticky paper.

"What are you doing that for?" inquired Vym.

"Doing what?" asked the ogress, grinning more than ever.

"Why, winking and smiling."

"My goodness, can't a person wink or smile?"

"Yes," put in the gardener, "can't a person have a little private joke?"

Vym looked at the old man angrily. "What do you mean by a private joke? Are you on my side or not? A little while ago you were crying because you were sorry for me."

"Hee! Hee!" cackled the ogress, "*that* is the private joke. You thought he was on your side, but he isn't. And as to going home again, you're not going. You're going to stay here."

"What—what—what's that?" stammered Vym. He turned to the gardener. "I believe you are nothing more or less than a villain."

Nodding his head, Bunk chuckled. "Quite so," he replied.

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"Oh," cried the boy, "if there is any one meaner than you are, I have never seen them."

"Tut, tut!" responded the gardener. "You mustn't say that. If I was what you think I am I would be *very* mean, but as I am not what I am, I'm only looking after Number One."

"Which is to say," put in the ogress, "that Zylograb *has* come home, and that *we* have got *you*, and that *you* have got to take your place on the sticky paper with the rest of the boys."

Whereupon she walked over to the door, slammed it shut, put her back against it and then shouted: "Let her go!" And with that Bunk took a bottle of pills from his pocket and swallowed one. And the minute he did so his body stretched all over so that his coat split up the back, and zip—there he stood, not Bunk, the gardener, but Zylograb, the Unappeasable Boy Catcher, ten feet tall, three feet thick and five feet wide; and with a head that was as big as two barrels. If the ogress, his grandmother, was ugly, he was even worse, so the less that is said about his looks the better

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"Now," said Zylograb to the boy, "you can see where the joke comes in. I don't know when my grandmother and myself have had such a good laugh. Just come this way, please, until I measure you for your place on the sticky paper."

Well, of course Vym simply hated to be measured for the sticky paper, but what could he do? There he was shut up in the room with the ogress at the door and no one to help him, and it looked as though he was done for. Yes sir-ee, it looked very much that way, and perhaps it would have been that way if Zylograb had not chanced to have a hole in his coat pocket so that as he walked ahead of Vym between the rows and rows of boys, the bottle of pills slipped out and fell to the floor. Zylograb did not notice it, so Vym picked up the bottle, and as he walked along gloomily to be measured he read the label which said: "To be yourself—take one."

Then like a flash a bright idea came to Vym. Quickly he uncorked the bottle and pouring out a handful of the pills handed one to each boy as he



The bottle of pills slipped out and fell to the floor

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passed along. "Eat it, quick," he whispered. And as each boy had nothing else to do, and besides as all boys love to eat, every boy that received a pill swallowed it at once, and the effect was simply marvelous.

Before Vym and Zylograb had gotten half way to the measuring table dozens of boys had gotten loose from the sticky paper and were themselves again. And when Vym saw that, he ran up and down the room giving out the pills to the rest of the boys as fast as he could, so that presently there was a small army of them, big and little, fat and thin, tearing around the room leaping and jumping with joy because they were free again.

"Catch 'em! Catch 'em!" bawled Zylograb to his grandmother, the ogress, snatching right and left at the boys.

"Catch 'em yourself," snapped the ogress, who was trying to keep the boys from pushing her away from the door, "and catch 'em quick or they'll be catching us."

And that is just what happened. The more

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Zylograb and his grandmother tried to catch the boys the more boys there were to catch, for in a few minutes Vym had freed every boy in the room, and as there were hundreds of them you can see Zylograb and the ogress had quite a job on their hands. Indeed they had too much of a job, for Vym put himself at the head of the boy army and charged the Unappeasable Boy Catcher and his grandmother with a yell.

"Don't be afraid," he shouted. "We're too many for them. We'll take them prisoners and the castle will be ours."

"Just you wait," bawled Zylograb, shaking his fist at Vym, "just you wait until I get hold of you."

"Bah!" replied Vym. "You're not going to get hold of me. We're going to get hold of you."

And with that every boy in the room started for Zylograb at once, and in a moment they had piled on top of him and tied his arms and legs fast. Then they pushed the ogress into a corner and frightened her so she promised to show them the way out of the castle.

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And so it was that fifteen minutes later a stream of boys poured out of the castle door dragging Zylograb and his grandmother and tied them to a large tree on the lawn. After which they went back into the castle and brought out all the gold and silver and jewels the Unappeasable Boy Catcher had saved up and piled the treasure on the grass. And having done that they set fire to the castle and burnt it to the ground.

Then Vym turned to where Zylograb and his grandmother were tied. He was wondering what to do with them, but goodness, he need not have wondered, for the ogress and the Boy Catcher had each become part of the tree themselves. You see, if you tie an ogre or an ogress to a tree they are done for. That is why so many trees have such queer bumps and lumps on their trunks. Vym did not know that and perhaps you do not, but if you want to make sure it is so, just catch an ogre and tie him to a tree and you will find out.

Well, of course after Zylograb and his wicked grandmother were disposed of there was nothing

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else to do but to divide up the gold and silver and jewels, and as soon as that had been attended to each boy took his share and went off home rejoicing. Some lived in Pudge and some lived in other cities, but enough of them lived in Pudge to tell everybody of the wonderful way in which Vym had set them free and done away with Zylograb, so that boys in future could play in the streets of Pudge all they wanted to.

And to say that Vym has plenty of boys to play with is putting it mildly. He has *more* than he can play with, for every boy of every kind in Pudge is only too glad to play with Vym, who put an end to the infamous career of the Unappeasable Boy Catcher.

THE MILLION JOINTED HOPOFF

Have you ever seen a Million Jointed Hopoff? If not, then perhaps it is time that you learned just what he is like, so that if ever you do see him you will know what you are running from.

A Million Jointed Hopoff is a very large and pliable creature inhabiting islands that have plenty of room and precipices. He likes the room because he is so large, and he likes the precipices so he can hop off them. He also likes plenty of sandy beach so he can sit on the hard sand and write words on it with the sharp end of his tail when the tide is low.

There is something even more surprising about this creature, for wherever he is, there is also a pirate's buried treasure. Yes, sir-ee, after a pirate's treasure has been buried for a number of years and been undiscovered, a Million Jointed Hopoff appears in the neighborhood and begins to make memos in the sand with the end of his tail, and as soon as he has made a memo he lets the tide wash it out to sea.

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The reason he writes in the sand and lets the tide wash the writing away is because he is trying to coax somebody to come to the island and dig for the pirate's treasure which is always buried right at the foot of one of the precipices. Then while they are digging he wraps himself all about himself, which he can easily do because he has a million joints, and hops off the precipice on top of them. And as he is about a mile long as the crow flies and makes quite a large bundle when he is wrapped about himself, you can easily see when he hops on a person from the top of a precipice, he knocks them into smithereens, which tickles him very much.

Well, one hot, blistering, sunny, tropical day, the Million Jointed Hopoff which this story is about sat on the beach of an uncharted island scribbling in the sand as hard as he could, and this is what he wrote:

"Dear Public—

"Why fret and worry and work for a living when all you have to do is to repeat the word LOOT

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seventy times to be transported to an island that contains a pirate's hidden treasure. Come one, come all, and dig for it!

"Yours respectfully,

"The Million Jointed Hopoff.

"P.S.—I will meet you on the beach."

"My goodness," he grumbled, "here I've been writing notes for a week, and so far no one has come."

And then while he was still grumbling, away up the beach two small figures appeared, and the Million Jointed Hopoff stopped writing and hastened to meet them.

"Hello," he said, looking at the two boys who stood before him, "who are you and where did you come from?"

Whereupon the boys told him that their names were Nip and Tuk and that they had come from their home in Rusk, an ancient Oriental seaport.

"We found your note washed up on the beach," they said, "and not having anything else to do we

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thought we would come and get the pirate's treasure, so we repeated the word LOOT seventy times, and here we are."

"Hum," said the Million Jointed Hopoff, "why didn't you bring some other folks with you? I like a crowd, it makes a much bigger squash when they are hopped on."

"When they are hopped on?" repeated Nip. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing," said the Million Jointed Hopoff, "I was just thinking aloud. Ahem! Are you brothers, or what?"

"We're chums," said Nip and Tuk. "We go everywhere together and we take each other's part. If anybody hurts one of us he's got to hurt both of us."

"Quite so," said the Million Jointed Hopoff, "I understand, you *both* wish to be squashed. Come this way, please."

Then he led them to the foot of a towering cliff and showed them a pile of sand with several spades sticking in it. "Go ahead and dig," he said, "the

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treasure is right underneath that pile of sand and it is well worth digging for, I can tell you."

Then having started them to work he hurried away to the top of the precipice so that he might wrap himself about himself and be ready to hop on them.

Now if it had not been for one thing this story would end right here, because the Million Jointed Hopoff would have hopped on the boys and squashed them, but the one thing that kept him from doing it was that both Nip and Tuk had been born lucky instead of being born rich, and so just as the Million Jointed Hopoff started to hop on them, they suddenly decided to stop digging for a while and go to the beach and take a swim. And, therefore, instead of hopping on them the Million Jointed Hopoff hopped right into the hole they had dug and got his eyes so full of sand it blinded him and made him roar awfully.

And Nip and Tuk when they saw him hop into the hole and heard him roar, knew right away he had intended to hop on them, so before he could



The Million Jointed Hopoff hopped right into the hole

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get the sand out of his eyes they took to their heels and ran off as fast as they could.

"Phew!" said Nip, as he paused to get his breath, "whatever shall we do? We ought not to stay on this island while that Million Jointed Hopoff is here."

"No," said Tuk, "it isn't safe."

So off they trudged to the interior of the island so as to be as far from the Million Jointed Hopoff as possible, and after climbing up and scrambling down, and scratching themselves on bushes, and stumbling over stones, they came to a smooth, grassy place and there, sitting on a big, round rock, was a black bearded man with fuzzy eyebrows and a bright red handkerchief tied about his head. Over one eye he wore a green patch, on his feet were high boots, and in his belt were pistols, and knives and cutlasses. In fact, he *looked* very, very dangerous and fierce, but from the way he groaned and from the way he leaned forward and dropped his head in his hands after glancing at them a moment, he *felt* very, very *sad*.

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"Excuse me," said Nip.

"What do you want," said the stranger, "can't you see how worried I am?"

Whereupon Nip and Tuk told him how they had come to the island after finding the memo of the Million Jointed Hopoff, and how the Million Jointed Hopoff had come so near hopping on them while they were digging for the treasure.

"And please," continued Nip, "we want to ask you how to get back home even if we can't take the treasure with us."

"Take the treasure with you!" shouted the stranger, "I should say not. That treasure belongs to me. I'm Slash, the pirate, and I buried that treasure thirteen years ago."

"But," asked Tuk, "why didn't you come back after it?"

"Why?" said the pirate. "You ask me why? Just listen."

Well, just to begin I've always been

A raging pirate chief, sir,

With a black mustache and the name of Slash

And a courage past belief, sir.

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And I've always laughed as I sunk a craft
With a laugh chock full of dread, sir,
But that was before I stopped ashore
Just long enough to wed, sir.

For after that in a four room flat
I passed most all my days, sir,
I dared not roam a block from home—
My wife had funny ways, sir.
In vain I told her of the gold
I'd buried on this isle, sir,
One eye she shut nor answered but
With cold, derisive smile, sir.

For thirteen years she boxed my ears
But having right good health, sir,
I never balked but talked and talked
And argued for my wealth, sir;
Until one day—"Oh, go away,"
Sez she, "and find your gold, sir!"
The door went slam—and here I am
A-doing as I'm told, sir.

As he spoke the last line he leapt into the air
and tore at his beard, after which he spun about
until finally he fell on his face. "No doubt," he
said, as he scrambled to his feet, "you are wonder-

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ing at my lack of excitement now that the treasure is almost within my reach.”

“Oh,” said Nip and Tuk, “aren’t you excited?”

“Excited,” exclaimed the pirate, “well, I should say not. Flurried I may be a trifle, but excited—well, not yet.”

Then he told them that the reason he was so flurried was because he could not make up his mind how to tell the Million Jointed Hopoff that the treasure belonged to him. “How would you do it?” he asked.

“Why,” said Nip, “I would just go to the Hop-off and say—‘See here, I am the fellow who buried this treasure, so just go off and let me dig it up in peace.’”

“Oh, you would, would you?” responded the pirate. “Well, suppose you were so bashful you did not *dare* to do it?”

“Bashful!” repeated Tuk.

“Yes, bashful,” bawled the pirate, glaring at him. “You don’t suppose for a minute that I’m *afraid*, do you?”

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"Well," said Nip, "it seems sort of strange for a pirate to be bashful."

"Not half as strange," responded Slash, "as for a pirate to be afraid. At first I *did* think I *was* afraid, but after pondering the matter I decided it *must* be bashfulness. And now I don't know what to do. How would you like to break the news to the Million Jointed Hopoff for me?"

Nip looked at Tuk and Tuk looked at Nip. Then they both shook their heads. "We wouldn't like it," they said.

"Humph!" said the pirate.

Then he took one of the pistols from his belt and squinted down the barrel carefully. "Do you mind," he inquired, "if I blow my brains out?"

Nip and Tuk jumped. "Oh," they cried in horror, "you wouldn't do that, would you?"

"Well," said the pirate, "I might if I wasn't so awfully bashful, and if you don't speak to the Million Jointed Hopoff for me, I'll have to do it whether I'm bashful or not."

Whereupon Nip and Tuk, not wishing to be the

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cause of the pirate blowing his brains out, agreed to speak to the Hopoff for him, although they did not feel like doing it at all, and kept hanging back and hanging back when the pirate urged them to start at once to where the Million Jointed Hopoff was still rubbing the sand out of his eyes.

"Go on," he said, "the more you think about it the less you'll want to do it."

So finally Nip and Tuk, feeling rather scared and with their knees wobbling, went back to the beach and got there just as the Hopoff rubbed the last grain of sand out of his eyes. Then he winked hard and looked around.

"Ah," said the Million Jointed Hopoff, scowling, "so it's you, is it? I suppose you've come back to begin digging again. Well, you're not going to do it. No one shall dig for the treasure that I cannot hop on and I do not dare to try and hop on you because just as I do you jump away and I get my eyes full of sand. I shall wait until some person comes along who has had no experience with Hopoffs."

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"Dear me," said Nip, "we had never seen a Hop-off until we saw you."

"We never knew there was such a thing," said Tuk.

"I don't believe it," snapped the Million Jointed Hopoff. And though the boys did their best to convince him that they were speaking the truth, he just kept on shaking his head sulkily, so finally they told him about Slash, the pirate; how he was the one who had buried the treasure but he was too bashful to ask the Hopoff for it. "He says," continued Nip, "that he needs the money awfully."

"And if you don't let him have it," put in Tuk, "he'll blow his brains out."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Million Jointed Hop-off. "Blow his brains out, eh?" Then he cracked his tail like a whip. "I have an idea. I'll let him dig up his treasure and while he is doing that he can let me hop on him. That will save him the trouble of blowing out his brains and at the same time afford me a little recreation."

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So Nip and Tuk went back and told the pirate what the Hopoff had said, and although he swooned twice from excitement while they were telling him, he finally decided to accept the offer.

"If I go home without that treasure," he said, "my wife will never speak to me again, so I've simply got to have it."

"But," said Nip, "you won't be able to go home after you've been hopped on, will you?"

"I should say not," exclaimed Tuk, "why you'd be squashed flat."

"Phew!" exclaimed the pirate, "so I would. I never thought of that. My, what a narrow escape!"

Then he told Nip and Tuk that of course the only way they could get off the island was to go on his pirate ship which was anchored in a bay near by. "But," he added, "*you* can't go unless *I* go, and I shall *not* go until I get that treasure; and I do not intend to be squashed getting it, either. So you had better try to think out some other way."

Well, of course it was very easy for Slash to say

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that, but it was not so very easy for Nip and Tuk to do what he said, and it is possible they might have stayed on the island and thought the rest of their lives, if suddenly the Million Jointed Hopoff had not burst through the bushes into their midst.

"Wow!" yelled the pirate, staggering backwards.

"Ah ha," said the Hopoff, looking at Slash in a very impertinent way, "so you're the party who buried the treasure, eh? Well, I've been waiting, and waiting, and waiting for you to come down to the beach. Aren't you going to dig up your treasure?"

"Dig it up," repeated the pirate, "so you can hop on me while I'm doing it? Not while I have my brains in my head."

"But," said the Hopoff, "these boys said you didn't want your brains in your head. They said you wanted to blow 'em out."

"Maybe so," replied the pirate, "but I don't want them squashed out."

"Pooh!" sniffed the Hopoff, "what's the differ-

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ence?" Then he turned to Nip and Tuk with a scowl. "See here, I'll have you know I'm going to get *something* to hop on or I'll know the reason why. And I've got to hurry, too, for I can't stay away from the beach hardly five minutes without being *dreadfully homesick*. In fact, I'm feeling mighty bad right now. So see if you cannot coax your pirate friend to do what I want."

But instead of trying to coax the pirate, Nip jumped up and whispered in Tuk's ear, and then both boys whispered in the pirate's ear. After which Nip told the Hopoff very distinctly that Slash would *not* be hopped on.

"He won't, eh?" roared the Million Jointed Hopoff, angrily, "then I'll hop on him and I'll hop on you, too, whether you like it or not."

Whereupon he cracked his tail once more—kerzip—and started after them like fury. And that is exactly what Nip, and Tuk, and the pirate wanted him to do, for as he ran after them, they started running too, but further and further away *from the beach*. At first the Hopoff did not notice

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in what direction they were going, and then all of a sudden he did, but by that time he was so far from the beach that he had become *awfully* homesick. Yes, sir-ee, he was so ill he could not even walk, let alone run. And in a few moments more he curled up with a grunt, closed his eyes and did not care whether he ever got a chance to hop on anybody again in his life.

And no sooner had Nip, and Tuk, and Slash seen him do that than they knew here was their chance to dig up the treasure and carry it to the ship. And before the Million Jointed Hopoff had gotten over his wave of homesickness they had the treasure chest in a small boat and were rowing out to the vessel as cheerful as could be.

Well, if you could have seen that Million Jointed Hopoff, you would have been sorry for him. Pale as a sheet he wobbled his way back to the beach just in time to see the pirate raise the sails of his ship and hoist up the anchor; and to see Nip and Tuk standing on the rail, waving their caps to him.

THE MILLION JOINTED HOPOFF

“Good-by! Good-by!” they shouted.

The Million Jointed Hopoff did not say a word. He just gave them one disgusted look and then going to the top of the precipice, wrapped himself about himself and hopped—ker-plop—into the hole left by Nip and Tuk, and the pirate, when they had dug up the treasure. And if he was as disgusted as he looked, no doubt he is there yet.

As for Nip and Tuk, and Slash, the pirate, and the treasure, they arrived safely at the pirate’s flat where a grand celebration was held, and Nip and Tuk were handsomely rewarded by Mrs. Slash, who had, as might have been expected, taken charge of the pirate’s gold.

“Now don’t forget,” she said, on the morning they were leaving for home, “if you find any more memos telling where a pirate’s treasure is buried, to send my husband word at once. He *loves* to dig up buried treasure.”

Slash, the pirate, shook his head. “No, I don’t,” he said, “now that I know there may be a Million Jointed Hopoff around.”

THE CHEERFUL DISHWASHEROLA

Once there was a princess whose father was the Emperor of Smugg, and one day the princess became engaged to be married. And the minute she told her father about it, he began to worry about what he should give her for a wedding present, for he wanted to give something no one else had ever given. So he sent for the Earl of Chowp, his Private Secretary, just about the cleverest man in the kingdom and asked him what he could suggest.

"Well," said the Earl, who thought himself even smarter than the Emperor thought him, "there are lots and lots of things."

"Yes, yes, I know that," replied the monarch, impatiently, "but I want to give something original. Something no one else has ever given as a wedding present before. Come now, what do you say? If any one can think of a new sort of a present, you can."

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"Hum," said the Earl of Chowp, feeling even prouder of himself than he had a moment before, and thinking as hard as he could; "well, it seems to me a Cheerful Dishwasherola would be a unique gift."

"A cheerful what?" inquired the Emperor.

"A Cheerful Dishwasherola," repeated the Private Secretary. "It washes dishes, you know."

"Indeed," said the Emperor, "it does, eh? And how much does the machine cost?"

"It isn't a machine," said the Earl of Chowp, "it's an animal. It lives on soap and its sole amusement three hundred and sixty-five days in the year is washing dishes."

"Great Scott!" said the Emperor. "What a life! And how large is this—this Dishwasherola?"

"Well," replied the Private Secretary, "I can't quite say. I understand though it can wash the dirty dishes for a good sized town in twenty-two minutes. But—"

"No buts," interrupted the Emperor.

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And then as his daughter entered the room he told her he was going to give her a Cheerful Dishwasherola as a wedding gift so she would never have to wash her own dishes when she set up house-keeping.

"Oh, goody," responded the princess, clapping her hands.

"*But—*" put in the Earl of Chowp, loudly.

"No buts, I tell you," retorted the monarch. "You get that Dishwasherola without any buts."

"But I don't know where it is," said the Private Secretary, hastily. "I can't get it if I don't know where it is."

"You don't know where it is?" echoed the Emperor.

"Boo hoo," wailed the princess, "I *will* have a Cheerful Dishwasherola."

"No," said the Earl of Chowp, "I don't. You see I read about it in a book years and years ago and I only suggested it because you wanted something original."

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"Oh, you did, eh?" bawled the monarch, looking very disagreeable. "Well, you'll produce that Dishwasherola or you'll wash dishes for the princess the rest of your life. And now, go."

And the wretched Private Secretary went out of the palace dragging his feet and feeling perfectly miserable, for he had not the slightest idea where to find a Cheerful Dishwasherola.

Now when you are Private Secretary to an Emperor you get a very good salary and so it is not surprising that the Earl of Chowp lived in a fine castle with servants and all sorts of luxuries, but as he entered his house he wished very much that he lived in a cottage and had no luxuries at all, for of what use are luxuries if you have to wash dishes all the days of your life. Indeed so downcast was the Earl, that his favorite nephew, Grig, who was visiting the castle with his mother, the Marchioness of Mutch, noticed it the moment he entered the front door.

"Good gracious, uncle," he said, "what is the

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matter? You look as though you were going to be sick."

"I am," said the Earl of Chowp. "Indeed, I've already commenced."

And then he sat down in a carved armchair and told Grig and the Marchioness all about the Cheerful Dishwasherola, and how he had to get one for the princess or become a dishwasher himself. And by the time he had finished the Marchioness had fainted, for the thought of a relative of *hers* washing dishes was more than she could stand; and it took Grig and his uncle an hour to bring her to.

"Now," said the Earl, when the Marchioness had recovered herself, "what is to be done? I cannot and will not wash dishes for anybody."

Grig, who was a bright, cheerful looking little boy about eight years old, looked at his uncle earnestly. "I'll tell you what," he said, "let's go and find a Dishwasherola, and then you won't have to wash dishes. Don't you think that's a good way out of the trouble?"

"Well," said the Earl of Chowp, "it may be a

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good way but I am not at all sure it's the right way. However, it seems to be the only way, so perhaps we had better try it."

Then he told Grig they would start the next morning. "Of course," he said, "I really ought not to take a boy of your age along with me, and I wouldn't except that it has been so long since I studied geography I've almost forgotten it, whereas I understand you have been doing perfectly fine in it at school."

"Yes, indeed," said Grig, "I can draw almost every map in my atlas, and I am sure that will help us to find the Dishwasherola."

So at dawn the following day the Earl of Chowp and his nephew, Grig, and their servants and a long string of moving vans to carry their belongings, started out to hunt for the Cheerful Dishwasherola, but though they started in very good spirits they did not feel half so cheerful when, after traveling almost a week they found they might as well have stayed at home, for not a sign could they see of the creature for which they were hunting.

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"It's no use," groaned the King's Secretary, "I shall have to return to the castle and practice dish washing. My doom is upon me."

"Oh, don't say that," responded Grig, "we haven't tried half the maps in my geography yet. Cheer up, uncle."

"Cheer up," retorted the Earl of Chowp, bitterly. "It's easy for *you* to talk. *You* won't have to wash dishes when we get home."

Then he rolled himself in his blanket and stretched out by the camp fire they had built and promptly fell asleep, which goes to show he was not half as much worried as he said he was. But Grig could not sleep at all. Although he let on he was not worried, he was, very much, for he knew if his uncle did have to go back and wash dishes the rest of his life the disgrace would almost kill his mother, the Marchioness.

"Gee, whiz," he muttered, "we simply *must* find that Dishwasherola, *somehow*."

It was full moon and for a long time he just lay and watched the silvery disk and thought and

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thought. And then suddenly he heard something, far, far off, and sat up on his blanket and listened with all his might. And what do you think he heard? Growls, or howls, or roars? No, sir-ee, he heard singing—that is, singing of a sort; something that sounded like the steam piano they have in the circus only saying words, and these were the words:

Keep out of the kitchen, Maud,
I'll do the dishes for you.
Cheer up, be gay—go off and play,
No more shall housework bore you.
I'll be your drudge so do not budge
From your seat at the pianola—
Keep out of the kitchen, Maud—
Leave all to the Dishwasherola.

“Uncle, uncle,” he cried, shaking the snoring Earl as hard as he could, “wake up!”

And the Earl of Chowp, rubbing his eyes and yawning, sat up and began to listen, too. “Jiminy crickets!” he exclaimed after a moment, “I do believe it *is* the Cheerful Dishwasherola. I remember now the book said it always sang at its

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work and had a voice like a locomotive. Quick, let's be moving before it stops singing."

So all that moonlight night the travelers hurried toward the place where the singing seemed to be, and about daybreak they came to a queer looking town nestling in a valley, and when they got there the singing was so loud it made you put your fingers in your ears. And then just as the sun rose above the distant hills, it stopped and people began to come out of the houses and move about the streets.

"Excuse me," said the Earl of Chowp, touching one of the passing citizens on the shoulder, "but what was that singing we heard a while ago? Was it the Cheerful Dishwasherola?"

"Sure," replied the man, proudly, "it was *our* Dishwasherola. Doesn't he sing great?"

"Fine," responded the Earl, "I'd like to own one myself. Are there any more around here?"

"Well," said the citizen, "you'll have to see the Mayor about that. I have heard that this valley used to be full of 'em but you'd better see the

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Mayor to make sure. That is his house at the end of the street."

So Grig and his uncle went to see the Mayor about it. "My," said the Earl, as they knocked at the door of the official's dwelling, "I do hope he can tell us where there *is* another Dishwasherola. He ought to know."

"I hope so, too," said Grig, "but if there are no more, what shall we do?"

"Well," said the Earl, "the only thing we *can* do *then* is to buy this one. But I guess the Mayor can tell us where to find another."

But alas, the Mayor could not do anything of the kind. He was a round little man with a bald head and he wore a long black gown with fur at the neck. "I'm very sorry," he said, when he heard what they wanted, "but so far as I know the Dishwasherola we have is the last of the breed."

"Dear me," said the Earl of Chowp, his heart sinking, "isn't that awful? I simply *must* have a Dishwasherola. How would you like to sell yours, eh?"

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The Mayor sprang to his feet quivering like a bowlful of jelly. "Sell the Cheerful Dishwasherola that has been the pride of our town for generations? Never, sir, never!"

"But," put in Grig, "perhaps you don't understand what a fix my uncle is in." And he told the Mayor all about the Emperor and how he had insisted that the Earl produce a Dishwasherola for his daughter's wedding present. "Just think," he added, "what will happen to my uncle if you don't sell him your Dishwasherola."

"Just think," replied the Mayor, "what will happen to me if I do. In the first place I should lose my job, and in the second place I should probably lose my life, for the housewives of the town are as proud of our Dishwasherola as your mother is of her kitchen cabinet, if she has one."

"She hasn't," replied Grig, "but if she had I *know* she would sell it if we gave her the same reasons for buying it that we have given you for buying the Dishwasherola."

"Maybe so," said the Mayor, "but I can't help

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what your mother would do. I only know that *we* will *not* sell our Cheerful Dishwasherola."

"Then," shouted the Earl of Chowp, losing his temper and leaping to his feet, "I'll—I'll kidnap it."

"Ho, ho," laughed the Mayor. "Excuse this merriment, but you'll kidnap it, will you? That's good! Why, my dear sir, the Cheerful Dishwasherola weighs three tons and is so set in his ways that if you tried to steal him, why—well, I'll tell you what, just come and see for yourself."

And with that he led them to a large, round building with a glass roof, and there inside they saw the Cheerful Dishwasherola and the sight of him made them gasp.

Now, perhaps you have seen a Dishwasherola and then again perhaps you have not, so perhaps to be on the safe side it will do no harm to describe what this one looked like. A Dishwasherola's mouth is three feet wide and at each corner of his mouth he has an eye. His body is as round as a plate and polished like one, but all over his back

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are holes opening out like funnels, and all about his body in a ring are legs with feet on them, and half of his feet are made of soft bristles and half of spongy-like stuff. Way up on his forehead is his nose which is what he sings with, but as Grig and his uncle looked at the creature he was snoring with it, for he was sound asleep.

"You see," said the Mayor, "this Dishwasherola will only work on moonlight nights, that is why the roof is of glass, but if we especially desire him to work at other times we can frequently induce him to do so by feeding him scented toilet soap instead of kitchen soap. He is passionately fond of scented toilet soap but as it is horribly expensive he does not get it very often, you may be sure. However, as you have never seen a Dishwasherola work I'll try to get him to give an exhibition."

With that he stuck a large piece of toilet soap on a pole and extended it over the railing of the huge tank or tub the Dishwasherola was occupying. "Hi," he shouted, as loud as he could.

The Dishwasherola opened one eye and then

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when he saw the toilet soap he opened his other eye and gulped down the soap in a flash, and as soon as he did that the Mayor reaching into a box that stood near by began to hurl piece after piece of toilet soap into the Dishwasherola's mouth as fast as he could, and in three minutes the Dishwasherola was washing dishes as fast as *he* could.

And my, what a sight it was! Attendants outside the tank turned on tons of hot water until the floor of the tub was covered and then began hurling the dishes in, and as fast as they threw them in the Dishwasherola caught them, scrubbed them with his feet, soused them in the hot water, and then tossed them into a net above him where they were dried by the steam that came out of the holes in his back, and all the while he was chewing soap with his mouth and singing cheerfully with his nose.

"Marvelous, isn't it?" said the Mayor, after they had watched the performance for a while.

"Simply sublime," said the Earl of Chowp.

"And do you think you could ever kidnap an

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apparatus like that?" asked the Mayor, cheerfully.

"No," said the Earl, "I don't suppose we could."

"Ha," said the Mayor, scornfully, "I don't suppose anything about it. I *know* you couldn't. Why, if you can kidnap this Dishwasherola, you can have him, and my word is law in this town."

"Do you mean that?" asked Grig.

"Certainly I mean it. Why, I wouldn't know how to get him out of the building myself. He was there long before I was born, some say three hundred years."

The Earl of Chowp groaned. "It's no use, I'm done for." He staggered out of the building and down the street followed by Grig until they came to the inn where they had left their servants and wagon train.

"Go ahead, pack up," said the Earl, with another groan.

"All right, I will," said Grig, "but as soon as I have I'm going back to get that Dishwasherola, if you will help me."

"Are you crazy?" said the Earl.

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"No," replied Grig, "but the Mayor is, for he told us we could have the Dishwasherola if we could kidnap him and that is what we are going to do, but we'll need all your scented toilet soap to do it."

Then he told his uncle that while the Mayor was talking he had happened to remember that the Earl's valet in packing his bathtub had filled it full of the most exquisitely scented toilet soap to make his turkish towels smell nice, and that his plan was to coax the Cheerful Dishwasherola away from the valley by means of the toilet soap. "And I think it will work, too," he added.

"Hooray! Hooray-hooray-hooray!" shouted the Earl, beside himself with joy, "I know it will. Grig, you have saved my reputation!"

And so it was that ten minutes after that the Earl of Chowp and his nephew with their arms full of toilet soap stood alongside the tub where the Dishwasherola was again napping, while outside their servants waited all ready to travel.

"Hi," shouted Grig.

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The Dishwasherola opened one eye and then as the boy tossed him one of the deliciously smelling pieces of soap, he opened the other eye and caught it in his mouth. And the moment he tasted it he rolled *both* eyes and gave a blissful shudder, and then opened his mouth for more.

"No," said Grig, "you can't have any more now, but if you come outside you can."

And that was where Grig was taking a big chance. He knew the Dishwasherola could not talk but he did not feel sure it could not understand what you might say to it and hoped it could. And as good fortune had it, the Dishwasherola *did* understand perfectly, and scarcely had Grig and the Earl of Chowp quitted the building than there was a crash of glass and over the top of the walls came the Dishwasherola with his mouth watering for more of that toilet soap.

So Grig threw him a piece, and the moment he swallowed it, bing, the Earl threw him another; and that was the way they kept it up until they had quitted the valley and were well on their way to



Grig threw him a piece of soap

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the court of the Emperor of Smugg. And then for fear the toilet soap would not last, Grig put a piece on a stick and held it just in front of the Dishwasherola's mouth, and as the Dishwasherola could not travel very fast he was able to coax the creature without wasting any more soap.

Well, of course, the inhabitants of the town in the valley were furious, but as the Mayor had given Grig and his uncle permission to carry off the Dishwasherola if they could, they could not say a thing against it. But they *did* something, yes, sir-ee. They took the Mayor and they put him in the tub where the Dishwasherola had been and heaped dishes all over him and he had to wash his way out all day long.

As for Grig and the Earl, and the Cheerful Dishwasherola, they arrived home safely and it is hard to say which was the more delighted with the Dishwasherola, the Emperor or his daughter.

"Chowp," said the monarch, "you have done yourself proud. You are a great man."

"Your majesty," replied the nobleman, "my

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nephew here will be a greater man when he grows up. If it had not been for him I should probably be washing dishes for your daughter, instead of the Cheerful Dishwasherola doing it."

And the Emperor, turning to the vast crowd that had gathered to witness the opening of the new building which had been built for the princess' wedding present, commanded them to give three cheers for the boy who had given the princess the most wonderful gift a princess had ever received.

And my, how the people did cheer, for you see they felt cheerful, especially the ladies, because they knew the princess would loan them her wedding present, and now that the Dishwasherola was on the job there would be no more dishwashing forever in the Kingdom of Smugg.

THE CASTLE OF GIANTS

It is certainly very, very nice when you have been very, very poor to find out all of a sudden that somebody has died and left you a very, very large fortune. Or at least that was the way the Widow Weed of Skcratch felt about it when on returning to her cottage after a hard day's work she was told by her little son Spud that a gentleman wished to see her and was waiting in the parlor.

"What does he want to see me about?" she asked. "No one has wanted to see me for a long time except you, Spud."

"Well," said Spud, his blue eyes shining with excitement, "he says your step-uncle on your father's side has died and left you a fortune."

"A—a—a fortune!" stammered the widow, beginning to feel rather excited also, "oh, it can't be. Why—why—why my step-uncle on my father's

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side never liked me and I didn't like him, he was too fussy. There must be some mistake."

"Gee whiz, I hope not," said Spud.

"So do I," said his mother, "but I am afraid *something* is wrong."

Then she went into the parlor and shook hands with the visitor who was a very, very solemn looking person.

"Madam," he said, "I am the solicitor of your step-uncle on your father's side, and your step-uncle on your father's side having now passed away I have come to tell you that he has left you all he had. Perhaps you knew he was awfully rich, and you are his nearest relation."

"No," said the widow, "I didn't. I knew he was awfully fussy, though. Why, the last time he was here he got mad because I didn't ask him to have a second piece of pie, and we have never spoken since."

"Hum," said the stranger, "how unfortunate. And why didn't you ask him to have a second piece of pie?"

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"Because," replied the widow, "there wasn't any more."

"A very good reason," said the solicitor, "but still you might have *asked* him, anyway, and if you had perhaps things might have come out differently."

The Widow Weed looked puzzled. "How do you mean, different?" she asked.

"Well," continued the caller, "your step-uncle on your father's side has left you his entire fortune *but*"—he stopped and stared at Spud and his mother sternly—"he left it in such a way that I'm afraid you'll have a horrid time getting it. And that is why I say it would have been better if you had asked him to have another piece of pie just for politeness' sake, even though you couldn't have given it to him, because *now* he has gotten even with you by almost giving you a castle full of gold, silver and jewels, and yet not quite."

The Widow Weed stamped her foot. "*Will* you tell me what you mean? What's the use of stirring me up this way?"

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"Well," said the lawyer, "what I mean is this. Your step-uncle on your father's side has left you about six tons of gold, silver and jewels but it is in a castle in the hills, and in the castle are six large disagreeable giants who have the use of the place rent free as long as they keep you from getting your step-uncle's riches."

"Oh," cried the widow, bitterly, "if that isn't just like the old thing, and all because he wasn't asked to have a second piece of pie."

And with that she threw her apron over her head and burst into tears, and by the time she had recovered her composure the caller had gone.

Now, strange as it may seem, whenever anybody in a town gets left a fortune everybody finds it out right away no matter how you try to keep it secret. And so it was that presently all the inhabitants of Skratch were talking about the Widow Weed's windfall. But when they found out how the fortune was left to her they stopped talking and began to laugh. They laughed and laughed, and pointed their fingers at Spud and his mother and asked them

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what they were going to do with the fortune they could not get.

"Never mind," said Spud, when he saw how miserable the widow felt, "I'll find out *some* way to get that money, you see if I don't."

The widow shook her head mournfully. "No, no," she said, "there isn't a chance. I am a poor woman and you are only a boy and there is no one to help us. What can we do against a castle full of giants?"

But just the same Spud determined to try to think out a way to get his mother's step-uncle's riches. So he went to a celebrated magician named Yow.

"I should like to know," he said, "just how to get about six tons of gold, silver and jewels out of a castle that is guarded by six giants? Perhaps you have heard about the case."

"Sure," said the wizard, grinning, "I've heard about it. In fact I laughed myself sick over it. Your mother's step-uncle on her father's side certainly did know how to play a good joke."

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"Oh," cried Spud, "it may seem a good joke to you but it is no joke to my mother when she has to work so hard. Can you tell me how to get the six tons of gold, silver and jewels or not?"

"Certainly I can," replied the magician. "Get six wagons, drive up to the castle and load the gold, silver and jewels on the wagons, and then drive home again. Ten dollars, please."

"Ten dollars?" repeated Spud. "What for?"

"What for?" said the wizard, "why, for telling you how to get the gold, silver and jewels out of the castle, and I'm not joking, either. I'm not in business for my health, you know."

"But," said Spud, "I haven't got ten dollars. I haven't even got ten cents. And besides, you didn't tell me how to get rid of the giants."

"You didn't ask me," said the wizard. "You asked how to get the gold, silver and jewels out of the castle. If I tell you how to get rid of the giants it will be ten dollars more, and as you haven't even got ten cents, what's the use?"

Well, you may be sure Spud was verv much dis-

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gusted when he heard that, but not half as disgusted as Yow was, for ten dollars is ten dollars, whether you are a magician or not.

"See here," said the wizard, "I can't afford to lose that ten dollars."

"Maybe not," replied Spud, "but neither can I afford to pay it to you when I haven't got it."

"Then," said Yow, "you shall take me to the castle and I'll explain matters to the giants, and I have no doubt when they learn that you cannot pay me my fee unless you get your mother's fortune, that they'll let you have it."

"I don't think so," said Spud. "It's nothing to them whether you get your fee or not. Why don't you tell me just what to do to get rid of the giants and then I could pay you the ten dollars I owe you, and the other ten dollars for telling me about the giants."

Yow shook his head. "No, sir-ee, I don't believe in throwing good money after bad. I'd rather have you owe me ten dollars than twenty. I prefer to see the giants."

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So Spud and the magician set off for the castle. When they got there they heard singing, and peeping in through the window saw that the six giants were sitting at a table eating soup out of a bowl as big as a swimming pool, and singing at the top of their lungs:

There may be folks who are fond of soup
But we are not that kind, sir.
We merely eat it to keep off croup,
Which fact please bear in mind, sir.
What we really love are dumplings boiled
With boys inside, well spanked or spoiled—
Good boys are nice but bad ones—yum!
We love the bad ones, every crumb.

So here's to the day that will come, we say,
When a boy perchance will come this way,
All fat and freckled, and plump and sweet,
And then, oh my, how we will eat!

Now you can just imagine when Spud heard *what* they were singing about he felt more like going back home than anything else, and no doubt he *would* have gone back home if the wizard had not grabbed him and held him fast.

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"Let go!" exclaimed Spud. "I don't think I'll bother about getting my mother's fortune just now."

"That's all right," retorted Yow, "you can do as you want about your mother's fortune but you can't do as you want about that ten dollars you owe me, so ring the doorbell and find out if the giants will see us a moment."

So Spud, wishing himself a thousand miles away, rang the doorbell with a trembling hand, and presently, bing, the door flew open with a crash and there stood a giant about thirty feet high with bushy green whiskers and ears that flapped to and fro. And the minute his eyes fell on Spud he commenced to smack his lips. Then he looked at Yow, the magician.

"How much do you want for him?" he asked the wizard, "or maybe you've brought him as a present to us. My, but it's a long time since we've tasted a boy."

Well, if Spud had been shaking in his shoes before, he was shaking in every part of his clothes by

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this time. "Now see what you've done!" he whispered to the magician. "All they're thinking of is eating *me*."

"Be calm," responded the wizard, "you've got to be cooked before you're eaten, so there's plenty of time to worry." Then he turned to the giant on the doorstep. "What sort of a way is this?" he inquired. "Why don't you invite us in? Haven't you any manners?"

"Sure," responded the giant with the green whiskers, "but the sight of that boy knocked 'em all out of me. My, isn't he nice and plump looking, though!" Then he led the way into the dining room where the other giants were.

"Brothers," he cried, "here's luck. This gentleman has brought us a fine, fat little boy. Three cheers!"

"Hip, hip, hooray!" bellowed the giants.

"Hold on! Hold on!" shouted the magician, "you are going too fast. I didn't bring the boy, the boy brought me so you could help me collect the ten dollars he owes me."

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Then he told the giants all about Spud's mother's fortune and asked them to turn it over to Spud so he could pay back the ten dollars he owed.

"But," said the giant with the green whiskers, "if we let him have the treasure we would have to pay rent for the castle and we couldn't do that, you know, we don't know how."

"Pooh! It's easy to learn how to do that," said Yow. "It's as easy as falling off a roof. I hope you are not going to let *that* stand in the way of my getting my ten dollars. Because if you are, just let me tell you that I'm a wizard and can make things very unpleasant for you."

"A wizard," screamed the giants, "well, well, well, if all the nice things in the world are not coming our way. Why, we'd rather eat a wizard than a boy any day. A wizard, well boiled, sharpens your wits, while a boy, in a dumpling or out, merely sharpens your appetite. Now we *will* have a feast."

And with that they seized Spud and the magician and hung them by their collars on hooks fas-

THE CASTLE OF GIANTS

tened in the ceiling, and then dragging forth a huge kettle filled it with water and placed it over the fire in the immense fireplace.

“My goodness,” said Spud, looking at Yow anxiously, “can’t you think of something to do to keep us from being cooked? I thought you knew all about magic.”

“And I do, too,” snapped the wizard, “but you can’t work magic spells when you’re excited. And you can’t hang on a hook like this without being excited, can you? As soon as I get quiet in my mind I’ll fix these giants, all right.”

But somehow the wizard could not get his mind quiet for the giants made so much noise getting things ready for the feast, and kept pinching his legs so much to see how tender he was, that he could not help being excited, though he tried his best not to be.

“Now,” said the giant with the green whiskers, looking first at Spud and then at the wizard as the water in the kettle began to boil, “if you are ready for the grand celebration, we are. Are you?”

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"No," replied the magician, "we are not, or at least, *I* am not, not nearly ready. And if you had any sense you wouldn't be ready either. Don't you know when you are going to cook anything you always ought to let it hang for quite a while to get tender, especially when it is as old as I am?"

"Hum," said the giant with the green whiskers, "perhaps that is so. Well, we'll eat the boy first. He doesn't need to hang any longer; he'll just melt in our mouths." Then he went off to assist the other giants in sharpening their carving knives.

"There," said the wizard, heaving a sigh of relief, "that is what I call clever business. If I hadn't had my wits about me they'd have put me in the pot right off."

"Oh, yes," said Spud bitterly, "you're very smart, indeed, looking out for yourself, but what about me? Why don't you do something to keep *me* from going in the pot?"

Yow coughed and wriggled uneasily. "My goodness," he said, "don't you think I'm trying? No one regrets the state of affairs more than I do,

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and if I could do anything to keep you from being cooked, I would, but my mind is a perfect blank, magically speaking. Only a tranquil mind can work enchantments and if you can tell me how to be tranquil right now, I wish you would. Can you?"

"No," said Spud, "I can't."

"Well, then," replied the wizard, "why find fault with me? And now here they come for you, so good-by and take care of yourself."

Sure enough the giants were coming, and Spud with a shudder gave himself up for lost. And then, just as the fellow with the green whiskers reached for him, the collar of the boy's coat gave a rip, and the next moment Spud had fallen from the hook to the floor. And the *next* moment he had sprung to his feet, leaped out of the window and started to run away as fast as he could.

Now the castle where the giants lived was a big round one, and all about it was a broad roadway. Of course what Spud *should* have done after he got out of the castle was to go straight home, but when

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you are frightened you do not always do what you ought to, so Spud, feeling that he must run somewhere very quickly, and hearing the giants scrambling and squeezing through the window after him, started at full speed along the roadway that circled the castle. But long before he had gone half around the castle the entire company of giants, with the green whiskered fellow leading, were pounding along the roadway also, in close pursuit.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" gasped Spud, "isn't this awful? I wonder if I'm getting ahead any?"

He looked back over his shoulder and then he ran harder than ever, for it seemed to him that he must surely be beating the giants because they seemed to be smaller, and if they were smaller of course that was because he was getting further away from them.

One, two, three times he circled the castle, and then he looked back once more. Hurrah, the giants were smaller than ever. He was beating them, sure.

"I'll go around two more times," he said to him-



He started to run away as fast as he could

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self, "and then if I am just as far ahead of the giants, I'll sit down and rest."

So taking a deep breath he went whizzing about the castle, and then he sat down on a stone near by and waited for the giants to catch up to him a little, for he could not see them anywhere. Five, ten, fifteen minutes went by, but still the giants did not come.

"My gracious," said Spud, "they must have given the race up and gone indoors. And if they did that I suppose they are cooking the wizard."

Now Spud did not like Yow for a cent because the magician had played him a very mean trick, but still he did not feel like going off home and not knowing for sure what *had* become of his companion. Of course, if Yow was being cooked he could not help him, but if he peeped in the window and found out for sure, then he could tell the wizard's family what had become of him.

So very cautiously Spud crept along the castle wall until he came to the dining room window, and then he took a quick look inside. "Oh," he gasped.

THE CASTLE OF GIANTS

For there, still hanging on the hook was the magician, but of the giants there was not a sign.

"Hi," called Spud, softly, "where are the giants?"

"Eh, what?" replied Yow, twisting about. And then when he saw Spud his eyes nearly popped out of his head. "Why—why—why—" he stammered, "didn't they catch you?"

"Not much," responded the boy. "I beat 'em all to pieces. I got so far ahead of them I couldn't see them, so I thought they had gone indoors to cook you. But now, I don't know where they are. If they are not inside they must be outside, and if they are not outside they must be in, and yet they do not seem to be either place. Whoever heard of such a thing?"

And then it was that the wizard gave a yell of joy and kicked and jumped about so it is a wonder the hook did not tear through *his* collar. "*I've* heard of such a thing," he shouted. "I know all about it. You'll never see those giants again. Listen."

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Then he told Spud that no giant should ever run. "It wears them out in no time," he continued, "and if they keep it up long enough it wears them to nothing. And that is what has happened to the six giants who were chasing you. I suppose they were so anxious to catch you they forgot about the danger to themselves, or thought they would get you before they wore themselves out too much. But anyhow they've done for themselves, so now you can help me down from this hook and we'll go and get your mother's fortune."

"Oh, that's all right," said Spud, "there's no hurry about your getting down. I can get my mother's fortune by myself very nicely."

"What," roared the wizard, "do you mean to say you are not going to help me?"

"You didn't help me when I was on the hook," retorted Spud.

"Oh, you—you—" sputtered the magician. "If I wasn't so excited I'd—I'd wish myself off this hook and I'd—I'd turn you into a clothes pin or something."

THE CASTLE OF GIANTS

But as the wizard had a very violent temper and as the longer he hung on the hook the more excited he got, he could not do a thing. And so it was that there he stayed while Spud went off and hired a number of express wagons to haul the gold, silver and jewels to his mother's cottage. And then after it was all done he climbed up on the table and prepared to help Yow down off the hook.

"Will you promise," he said, "not to turn me into anything later on if I let you down?"

And the wizard after scowling awfully and grinding his teeth for a few minutes, said he would, and Spud took out his pocket knife and cut his coat collar and let him drop to the floor. Then he gave him a good big heaping handful of the glittering gold pieces.

"There's your ten dollars," he said, "and more, too, so you needn't tell people I didn't pay you what I owed."

"Oh, I wouldn't think of doing such a thing," replied the magician, grabbing the gold eagerly, "I knew of course you'd pay me. And now that

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you are rich I hope you won't fail to come and see me when you need any more magical advice."

And then he went off and boasted to everybody in town how, being a wonderful wizard, he had rescued the fortune left to the Widow Weed by her step-uncle on her father's side. And it made such a good advertisement for him that he had to hire several assistant magicians to help take care of his increased business.

But Spud and his mother did not care what the old wizard said. They were too busy building a fine new house and buying automobiles and things with the gold, silver and jewels that Spud's mother's step-uncle on her father's side never thought she would get because he had locked them safe, as he felt sure, in the Castle of Giants.

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

Almost every boy's mother keeps preserves in her pantry closet, peach preserves, plum, apple, strawberry preserves; in fact, she has preserves of every sort for a hungry boy to eat.

And so it was that Queen Deft, who, with her husband, the King, ruled over the tidy city of Trym, had like all other mothers a most delightful collection of preserves in *her* pantry closet also. And when her little son, Prince Frol, asked for a piece of bread and butter she would spread it *thick* with preserves, and maybe the Prince did not like *that*.

Well, you would think when Prince Frol's mother was so nice to him and gave him preserves whenever it was good for him to have some, that he would have been contented. But, strange to say, he was not contented at all, and longed to get into the preserve closet and eat, and eat, of every

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kind of preserves there were, and never stop until there were no more left. And finally one day when his father, the King had gone off to a war or something, and his mother, the Queen, had gone off to a club or something, and the royal cook, and the royal housemaid, and the royal butler, and the royal footmen, because the King and Queen had gone off, had gone off also, the Prince saw his chance and slipping into the preserve closet he began to eat his way from the bottom shelf to the top.

And then when he got to the top shelf he stopped, partly because he was so dreadfully sticky all over, and partly because he was so awfully full, but principally because on the top shelf he suddenly discovered a Sticky Jameetis.

"Oh!" said the Prince, almost falling from the step-ladder he had dragged into the closet.

"How do you do?" exclaimed the Sticky Jameetis, whose long legs were curled up around his head and who was almost as sticky as the Prince.

"Oh—oh—very well," stammered the boy, starting with all his might. "But who are you?"

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

"Who am I?" responded the stranger. "Why, I'm a Sticky Jameetis, of course. And I'm really surprised you should come in this closet when you must have known I had been appointed to it."

"But," said the Prince, "I didn't know. I—I—I never knew there *was* such a thing as a sticky jameetis."

"Such a *thing*?" repeated the Sticky Jameetis, swinging around so that his legs dangled over the edge of the shelf. "I'm not a thing. I'm a person—a perfectly respectable person and a citizen of Jameeto. Haven't you ever been to school?"

"Why—why, yes," said Frol, "but they never taught us about anybody like you."

"Indeed," said the Sticky Jameetis, "then it must have been a very, *very* poor school."

"Well," replied the Prince, "maybe it was. For myself, I really don't care much for schools of any kind. And now I'll have to go and clean myself up before my mother gets back. Good-by!"

"Good-by, nothing," retorted the Sticky Jameetis. "Do you suppose I'm going to let you go

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

away and come back when you feel like it? Not much. Either I've been appointed to this preserve closet or you have, and the only way to find out is to return to Jameeto and asked the Grand Jamboree."

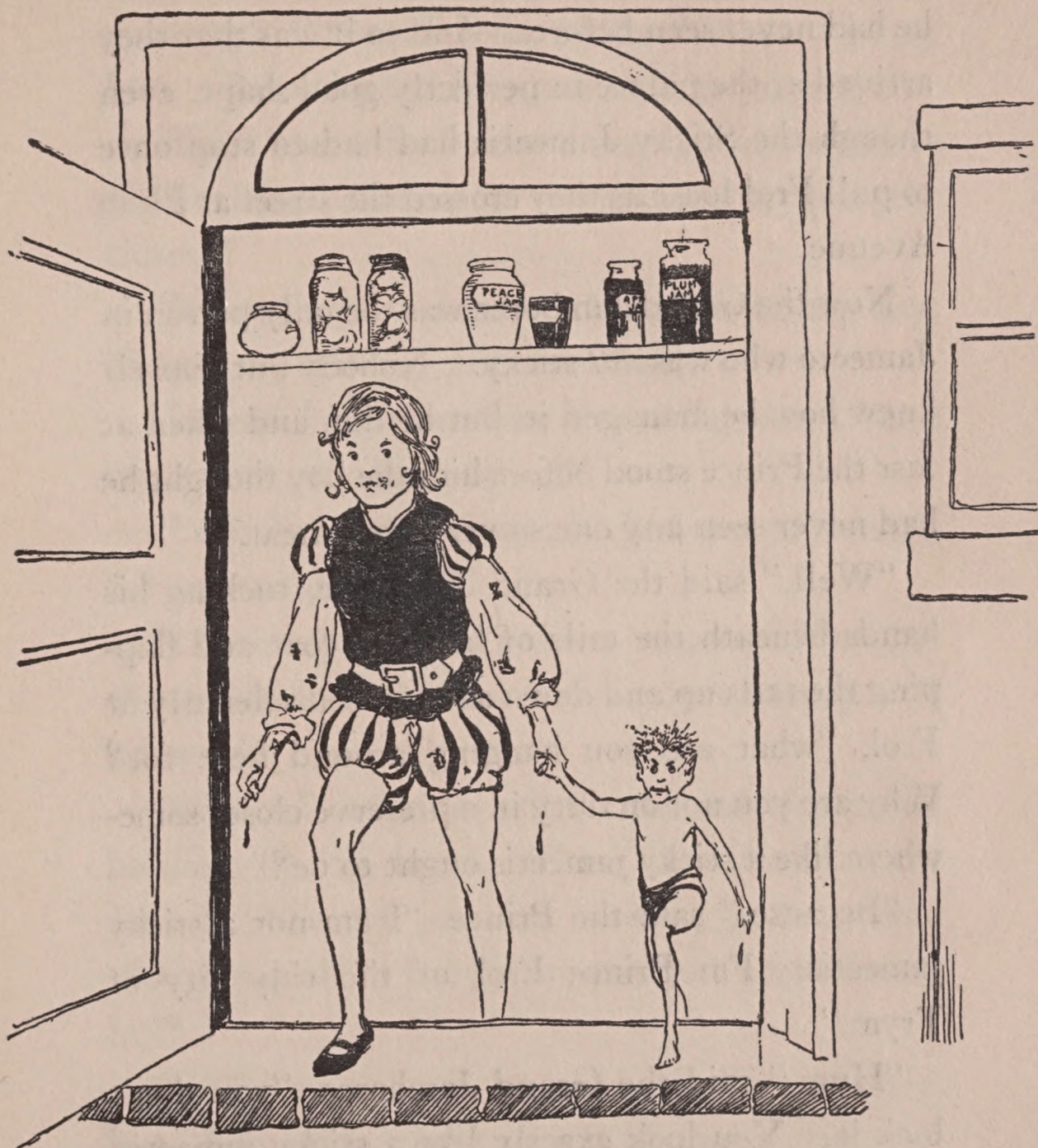
"What do you mean," said the Prince, "by going to Jameeto and the Grand Jamboree?"

"Actions speak louder than words," retorted the other, "just give me your hand a moment."

And then as the Prince extended his hand hesitatingly the stranger caught it and jerked him up on the shelf. And then before Frol knew it he found himself stumbling up a flight of stairs with the Sticky Jameetis pushing him from behind until at last they came to a door which swung open and let them into the city of Jameeto, all shiny and sweet, and beautifully sticky with every preserve in the world.

"Now," said the Sticky Jameeto, "we'll have to walk fast or we'll *stick* fast before we get to the Grand Jamboree's palace. So hurry all you can."

And you may sure the Prince *did* hurry, for he had no desire to get stuck fast anywhere in a place



They came to a door which swung open

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he had never seen before. And so it was that they arrived at the palace in perfectly good shape, even though the Sticky Jameetis had had to stop once to pull Frol loose as they crossed the street at Plum Avenue.

Now the Grand Jamboree was the only person in Jameeto who was *not* sticky. Nobody but himself knew how he managed it, but he did, and when at last the Prince stood before him the boy thought he had never seen any one so very, very neat.

"Well," said the Grand Jamboree, tucking his hands beneath the tails of his long coat and flapping the tails up and down as he gazed solemnly at Frol, "what are you hanging around here for? Why are you not on duty in a preserve closet somewhere like a sticky jameetis ought to be?"

"Because," said the Prince, "I am not a sticky jameetis. I'm Prince Frol of the tidy city of Trym."

"Hum," said the Grand Jamboree, "you don't look it. You look exactly like a sticky jameetis, only stickier. Are you sure you are not one?"

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

"I *know* I'm not," retorted the Prince. "I may be a trifle sticky but I am *not* a sticky jameetis."

"Then," said the Sticky Jameetis, who stood at Frol's elbow, "what were you doing in my preserve closet?"

"It wasn't your preserve closet," cried the boy, "it was my mother's preserve closet."

"Indeed," exclaimed the Grand Jamboree, "and what were you doing there?"

"Well," said the Prince, "I just sort of went in for a moment and—"

"I knew you hadn't been appointed to it," shouted the Sticky Jameetis, triumphantly. "I knew it."

"Silence," commanded the Grand Jamboree, holding up his hand. Then he turned to the Prince. "So you just sort of went in, eh? And did your mother know that you just sort of went in?"

"Well—er—ah—" began Frol, "not exactly, but—but I was going to tell her some day, perhaps."

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"Some day—perhaps—" echoed the Grand Jamboree, scornfully. "That's what they all say."

Whereupon he told the Prince that the start of a sticky jameetis was a boy who prowled in a preserve closet when he was not allowed to. "Every sticky jameetis in Jameeto," he went on, "was once a boy like you. *I* was once a boy like you but by working night and day and by exercising a firm determination to steer clear of preserve closets I have reached my present proud position as Grand Jamboree of this delightful spot. But I have no doubt you will be nothing else but what you are the rest of your days. It takes a soul above preserves to be anything else."

And with that he turned his back on the Prince and his companion, which was a pretty good sign that he had had quite enough of them.

"What does he mean?" asked the Prince, as he and the Sticky Jameetis left the palace of the Grand Jamboree.

"Blessed if I know," said the Sticky Jameetis, "I never can understand what he says when he

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

talks about a soul above preserves. No sticky jameetis can. And now I'll have to go back to my place in your mother's preserve closet. I'll tell her where you are if she asks me."

"Wait! Hold on!" shouted the Prince. "I'll go with you."

But the Sticky Jameetis did not wait. No sir-ee, he set off as fast as he could and the next moment disappeared around a corner.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the Prince, as he sat down on the palace steps dejectedly, "whatever am I going to do? I can't stay in this place. I—I don't like it at all."

And then as he sat there he heard a cheery whistling and saw that a very stout little boy, about his own age, was coming along the street and that he wore a large blue bib with white dots, and carried a huge pie in his arms.

"Hello," said the little boy, sitting down by the Prince and placing his pie carefully in his lap, "what's the matter? You look as though you were going to cry."

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"Well, I'm not," retorted the Prince. "I *never* cry. I'm—I'm only worried."

And then he told the other all about the fix he was in. "I don't know who you are," he went on, "but I suppose you live here or you wouldn't be so cheerful."

"Certainly I live here," said the little boy, "and I'm surprised you can't guess who I am. Don't you ever read books? Why, my picture is in hundreds of books with a poem underneath it like this:

Little Jack Horner, he sat in a corner,
Eating a Christmas pie,
He put in his thumb and pulled out a plum,
And said what a great boy am I.
But just let me add a few lines to the rhyme —
Though pie may be nice it gets tiresome in time,
And I often have wished, just betwixt me and you,
I could swap off my pastry for something quite new.

"Phew!" said the Prince, his eyes big with astonishment, "are you really Jack Horner? Well, I declare!"

"Yes," said the other, "I'm Jack Horner, though sometimes I wish I wasn't because I'm awfully tired

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of pie, and the Grand Jamboree won't let me have anything else."

"Why not?" asked the Prince.

"Goodness knows," said Jack Horner. "I suppose he thinks pie is the proper thing for Jack Horner, the same as jam is the proper thing for a jameetis. What do you think about it?"

"Well," said Frol, "I think pie is very good, and I think jam is very good, too. But I also think lots of other things are very good. Did you ever taste cookies?"

Jack Horner shook his head. "No. Have you got any?"

"Not here," said the Prince, "but my mother has big tin boxes of 'em in her pantry, ginger cookies, sugar cookies, and—and crullers. And—"

"Stop!" interrupted Jack Horner, "you're saying it too fast. Now please begin all over again. This is the most delicious conversation I have had for some time."

So Frol began all over again and told Jack Horner very, very slowly and distinctly all the

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splendid things to eat that his mother kept in her preserve closet.

"Oh, my," gasped Jack Horner, when he had finished, "to think of what I've been missing all my life." And with that he took his pie and flung it as far from him as he could. "Come on," he said, "let's go and visit your mother for awhile. Come on."

"All right," said the Prince, springing to his feet. And then he suddenly sat down again with a look of despair. "No," he said, "it's no use. I don't know how to get back. I don't even know where the preserve closets are in Jameeto. The Sticky Jameetis took me along so many streets he got me all mixed up."

"Well," said Jack Horner, "I guess that settles it then because I don't know either. Gracious, I wish I hadn't thrown away my pie now."

And there they sat on the palace steps two very doleful looking little boys, Prince Frol of Trym and Jack Horner of Jameeto. And there it was that the Grand Jamboree found them when he ap-

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

peared in the doorway all ready to take a stroll about the city.

"What's this?" demanded the Grand Jamboree, sternly, when he saw Jack Horner sitting by the Prince.

"Why, this is a little boy," said Jack Horner, jumping up quickly, "who is trying to find his way back to his mother's preserve closet, and—"

"I know all about him," interrupted the Grand Jamboree, "and I know all about his mother's preserve closet. But what I don't know is why after all your careful bringing up, you should pick such a companion. And where is your pie, sir? Where is your pie, eh?"

"Well," said Jack Horner, very much confused, "I—I—I dropped it," pointing to the mutilated pastry in the middle of the street.

"You—you dropped it!" exclaimed the Grand Jamboree in a horrified tone. "I don't believe it. You never did such a thing before, why should you do it now, eh? Look me in the eye! You did it on purpose, didn't you?"

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"Well," said Jack Horner, sulkily, "I'm—I'm tired of pie. Why should I always have pie and nothing else? This little boy—"

"Ah," said the Grand Jamboree, scowling, "so this little boy has been putting ideas into your head, eh? He's a dangerous character, that's what *he* is. Come inside, both of you." And in a jiffy he hustled the Prince and Jack Horner into the palace and upstairs to his private audience room.

"Now," he said, shaking his finger at the Prince, "I am going to make an example of you. Until you came to Jameeto, Jack Horner was perfectly contented with pulling plums out of his Christmas pie, and had a soul above preserves and other things; and was even in a fair way to become a worthy successor to myself on the throne of Jameeto. And then you come along and spoil everything. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"But," said the Prince, "I didn't mean any harm. He said he was tired of pie and I only told him about the cookies and crullers my mother made."

"Cookies! Crullers!" shrieked the Grand Jam-

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

boree. "Worse and worse! The sooner you are disposed of the better."

Whereupon he clapped his hands and into the room marched a very tall and very sticky looking gentleman with a stiff linen cap on his head.

"This," said the Grand Jamboree, "is the Manager of the Marmalade Department. He will turn you into a sticky jameetis. Of course you are already the start of one but as you seem to be inclined to stir up mischief here *while* you are turning into one, I think it would be best to turn you into one *at once*, because when you are a regular sticky jameetis I can appoint you to a preserve closet and keep you from putting nonsense into Jack Horner's head."

Then he turned to the Manager of the Marmalade Department. "Take this boy and drop him into the marmalade lake. When he comes up the third time pull him out and bring him here. Understand?"

"Right-o!" responded the Manager of the Marmalade Department, making a grab for the Prince.

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"Help!" yelled the Prince, leaping away from the Manager of the Marmalade Department.

"Come here," said that gentleman, wiping a trickle of jam off his nose.

"No," said the Prince.

"Why not?" asked the Manager of the Marmalade Department.

"Because I don't wish to be dropped into that lake," replied the Prince. "And I'm not going to be, either."

"No, don't you do it," put in Jack Horner.

"Silence!" thundered the Grand Jamboree, "or I'll turn you into a sticky jameetis also."

"Come on now," said the Manager of the Marmalade Department, beckoning to Frol, "it will soon be over. Why, you may even like it for all I know."

"No, I'd never like it," said the Prince, backing away, "and you needn't try to coax me."

"All right," roared the Manager of the Marmalade Department, "then I *won't* try to coax you." And he made another grab for the boy.

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

But as he did so little Jack Horner showed that he was a very good fellow for he put out his foot and the Manager of the Marmalade Department tripped over it and fell headlong. And by the time he had gotten up again Frol was bounding down the palace stairs.

"Stop!" bawled the Grand Jamboree.

"Wait until I catch you," bellowed the Manager of the Marmalade Department, making after the Prince.

Out the front door leaped the Prince and along the street as fast as he could go, and as they say fear lends a person wings you may be sure he went pretty swiftly.

"Oh, dear," he panted, "if I only knew where the door of our preserve closet was."

And then as he turned a corner who should he see coming out of a little house but the Sticky Jameetis.

"Hello," said the Sticky Jameetis, "what's your hurry?"

"Oh," said the Prince, "I—I just sort of felt like

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

running.” He did not dare tell the Sticky Jameetis what was really the matter, because he felt sure he would be on the side of the Grand Jamboree.

“Well,” said the Sticky Jameetis, “I saw your mother and she said to tell you not to worry about her being worried about you, as long as she knew where you were.”

“Humph!” said the Prince, “I think she might worry a *little*. Is her preserve closet in that house?”

“Yes,” said the Sticky Jameetis, “the stairs are just inside the door.”

Without another word the Prince dashed by the Sticky Jameetis, and into the house, and shut and bolted the door after him. Then he fumbled his way down the stairs that led to his mother’s preserve closet, and when he reached the bottom it took him about two minutes to rush out of the door of the closet into the royal kitchen. And there he found his mother talking to the royal cook.

“Why—why, where did you come from?” asked the Queen, starting back in astonishment. And

THE STICKY JAMEETIS

then seeing how sticky he was, she added: "You've been in the preserve closet again."

"Y—Y—Yes," stammered the Prince, "and I've been somewhere else, too. But the Sticky Jameetis said you were not worried."

"The Sticky Jameetis," echoed the Queen, "why what are you talking about? What on earth is a Sticky Jameetis?"

And of course when she said that, there was nothing for Frol to do but tell her all his adventures.

"Dear me," said the Queen, with a merry laugh, "what a surprising dream. That's what you get for taking a nap in my preserve closet. I ought to punish you but I guess you've been punished enough."

"But it wasn't a dream," said the Prince, "why, I saw everything just as plain."

"Well," said the Queen, "whatever it was, I hope it has taught you a lesson about prowling in preserve closets."

"Yes," said the Prince, "it has. But it wasn't a dream. How could it be?"

THE GRATEFUL FAIRY

"I don't know," said his mother, "you'll have to ask somebody brighter than I am."

So maybe, now that you have finished this story, you would like to write to Prince Frol of Trym and tell him what you think about the matter.

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